ACROSS / A14

Military says top Abu Sayyaf leader killed in Jolo clash

SUPER / C1

Super Countdown: 22 days 'til Super! artists' fair with KC Concepcion

NEWS / A2

Palace to raise gov't docs', nurses' salaries by P43B annually

SATURDAY SPECIAL / E1

Susan Roces sprightly, feisty, fun in comeback sitcom

German cops hands off couple's sex row

FRANKFURT—POLICE in the German city of Aachen received an unusual call for help late Wednesday when a woman telephoned to complain her husband was not fulfilling his

GERMAN COPS/ A5

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEA[illegible] VIEWS

Saturday, August 5, 2006 ★★ 7 sections [illegible].inq7.net

US cuts off terrorist money flow from RP

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES MOVED Thursday to financially incapacitate branches of a Saudi-based Islamic charity as well as a high-ranking official for allegedly helping al-Qaida bankroll terrorist acts.

The Treasury Department's action is directed at the Philippine and Indonesian offices of the International Islamic Relief Organization (IIRO). The

US CUTS/ A8

IT'S BEAUTIFUL FROM A DISTANCE BUT DEADLY UP CLOSE
On its 21st day of unrest and disquiet, Mayon Volcano spews out a lava trail that goes beyond the distance of all that had flowed before from past eruptions in the last 30 years. The lava advanced by 30 aerial meters beyond the six-km Permanent Danger Zone boundary.

REUTERS

Escape route bombed

Israel blasts bridges, cuts off OFWs; only way out of Lebanon is by sea

By Cynthia D. Balana and Christine O. Avendaño

EVACUATION BY SEA EMERGED YESTERDAY AS THE ONLY possible option for thousands of Filipinos trapped in Lebanon after Israeli forces bombed the bridges the Filipinos had been using to escape from the war-devastated country.

The blasting of the land route coincided with an urgent appeal from President Macapagal-Arroyo for the overseas Filipino workers to flee while there was still time.

"Leave while there is still a window of escape that is narrowing every day," she said.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. said the Israeli military bombed "the only escape out from Lebanon into Syria."

Conejos also said that a group of 450 OFWs was supposed to take that route yesterday and it had yet to be verified whether that batch had already left Beirut.

The 450 OFWs were scheduled to fly home on Sunday.

With the road leading to Syria now closed to evacuees fleeing Lebanon by buses, the Philippines is left with no other option but to evacuate the OFWs by sea, Vice President Noli de Castro said.

De Castro, presidential adviser on OFWs and head of Task Force Lebanon, said an Israeli bomb destroyed the bridges linking the Beirut-Tripoli-Al Arida-Damascus evacuation route. This route was also being used by other foreign evacuees. (*See story in The World, Page A20*)

The task force met behind closed doors yesterday and held a teleconference via satellite with Philippine officials in Lebanon, Israel and Greece. But the controversial envoy to Lebanon, Al Fran-

ESCAPE/ A5

FIERY PROTEST: Militant groups torch the Israeli flag. EDWIN BACASMAS

War knows no kibitzers, DH learns

By Volt Contreras and Jerome Aning

BRYLYN ECOY HARDLY CARED ABOUT current events in Lebanon and could only tell that the Hezbollah was on the TV news whenever her Christian employers would hurl angry "F--k you's" at the set.

But war knows no kibitzers—as this Filipino "DH" (domestic helper) realized.

Abandoned by her Lebanese employers, the 26-year-old Bacolod City native was the lone Filipino evacuee from Lebanon among the passengers of a regular Gulf Air flight that arrived at around 3 p.m. yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Unlike the other displaced OFWs who came before her, Ecoy's "solo" arrival was barely noticed by the media. Nor was it marked by copious tears.

Instead, Ecoy—with the word "Love" written on her light blue sweater—was smiling at the way "the Lord got me out of there, probably because He has other plans."

Her homecoming stories were not of terror or cruelty, but more of irony and survival

WAR/ A5

Bolante transfer to Chicago 'delaying tactic'

By Nimfa Rueda
Correspondent
and Philip C. Tubeza
in Manila

LOS ANGELES—THE PETITION TO transfer the political asylum case of ex-Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante to a Chicago immigration court—has been granted by the Los Angeles-based federal judge reviewing the case.

It was a "delaying tactic," said an asylum law expert based in LA. "Most of the witnesses—the immigration authorities who arrested Bolante—are based in Los Angeles," he said, adding that these witnesses would have to schedule trips to Chicago to testify, thus further delaying court proceedings.

Lawyer Harry Roque, director of the University of the Philippines College of Law's center for international legal studies, yesterday said he was scheduled to file an "amicus brief" with the Chicago immigration court on 55 E. Monroe St. at 8 a.m. Friday (Chicago time).

The document, drafted by Roque and three other UP experts in constitutional law and international law, argues that Bolante does not qualify as a refugee under US and international laws.

Roque said the document they had sent to the original court, located in the San Pedro Detention Center in California, was not accepted by the clerk of court because the Bolante case was already in the process of being transferred to the Chicago immigration court.

JUDGE/ A6

Sis, cousin say GMA 'the healthiest among us'

By Fe Zamora
and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

SOME OF PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo's kin cannot believe that she is gravely ill, as has been speculated.

Her elder sister, Cielo Macapagal Salgado, yesterday said the President had always been "the healthiest among us." Her cousin-in-law, Naty Tuason, said she could not remember the President undergoing medical treatment for a serious ailment.

"She's *matakaw* (loves food). She has a good appetite. I'm surprised at these reports," Tuason, a first cousin of the President's husband Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo, told the INQUIRER on the phone.

Salgado, a cancer survivor, said the

SIS, COUSIN/ A6

EDWIN BACASMAS

SHANGHAIED IN MANILA. International movie star Jackie Chan is here to open the first shop in his Asia-wide café. Part of the profits Chan has pledged to the Philippine National Red Cross and other civic groups. Red Cross Gov. Rosa Rosal accepts the pledge with the boys, who are potential recipients of Chan's scholarship program. He's also the latest UN World Tourism Ambassador. *(Story on Page A3)*

GMA: Meralco rates cut 52¢ per kWh in spot market

By Abigail L. Ho

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO YESterday said electricity consumers will enjoy lower power costs starting this month. This is because of the free-market competition in the electricity sector which began in June with the launch of the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM).

Power consumers in Metro Manila and surrounding provinces who use up at least 200 kilowatt-hours in a month will have their electricity bill slashed by 52 centavos per kilowatt-hour starting this month, the President told a news conference.

Other areas will have reductions in their power rates, but the 52-centavo reduction covers only franchise areas of the Manila Electric Co. (Meralco), the country's biggest distribution utility

GMA/ A6

Bishops may quit secret talks

By Christian V. Esguerra

ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS INVITED to a series of peace dialogues that had been quietly organized by Malacañang are reportedly considering pulling out.

Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, had grown hesitant to take part in the dialogues because of the possibility that the CBCP was being used for political interests, two highly reliable sources told the INQUIRER in separate interviews.

The sources—who were privy to the two-day "secret" workshop held early last week but asked not to be identified because of the sensitive nature of the issue—said Lagdameo made his reserva-

BISHOPS/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2006

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Bicol region and the eastern sections of Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms
SOURCE PAGASA

COMPILED BY KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/04/06

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Higher pay up for doctors, nurses

Palace plans to spend P43B a year to stem medical hemorrhage

By Gil C. Cabacungan, Jr.

MALACAÑANG IS PLANNING TO SPEND AN AVerage of P43 billion a year in the next four years to boost the salary scale of government doctors, nurses and teachers in a bid to stem the exodus of these professionals to more lucrative jobs abroad.

Under the Department of Budget and Management's proposed budget, the government is allocating an increase of P10.3 billion for personal services in 2007, P32.1 billion in 2008, P55 billion in 2009, and P74.9 billion in 2010.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya said these budget allocations showed that the government was not only bent on modernizing and expanding the country's infrastructure like roads, bridges and sea and airports but also on improving its "bureaucratic infrastructure."

Andaya pointed out that the higher allocation was on top of the P13 billion that the President has approved to increase the salaries of over a million government workers by P1,000 each this year.

On Labor Day, President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered the DBM and the Civil Service Commission to draft a bill that would not only complete the ongoing salary standardization program of the government but also overhaul the compensation system that would raise the salary levels of key service personnel such as doctors, nurses and teachers.

"The aim of this program is to correct the distortions in the salary scale which is the reason why you have teachers, nurses and doctors going abroad. If you compare these people's salaries in the private sector, it's too small," Andaya said. "Hopefully, this will stop the outflow of these people abroad."

Andaya said the government's goal was to give private-grade salaries to government doctors, nurses and teachers to at least narrow the gap and encourage them to continue serving in government. He noted that with the hard economic times, more Filipinos are depending on public hospitals and public schools for their basic needs.

Andaya said that other professional specialists like government geologists could also benefit from the huge increase in personal services budget in the next four years. "We used to have many mining experts in government employ but most of them are now gone due to better opportunities outside," Andaya said.

Another goal of the increase in personal services was to provide performance-based incentives to government workers in order to improve their productivity.

Andaya said this would complement the government's rationalization program which provides a golden parachute for bureaucrats qualified for the early retirement program.

20 pilots quit air force; 2 declared AWOL

By Nikko Dizon

SOME 20 PILOTS OF THE Philippine Air Force (PAF) have resigned from military service over the past few weeks to join local commercial airlines.

INQUIRER sources from the Air Force said the bulk of those who tendered their resignations were combat pilots from the 15th Strike Wing based in Sangley Point, Cavite and the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing based in Mactan Air Base in Cebu.

The PAF confirmed the resignations but Air Force spokesperson Maj. Augusto de la Peña told the INQUIRER the number of pilots was less than 20.

"Yes, there were pilots who have resigned but they wouldn't number to 20.

I think they're less than 20," de la Peña said.

He also said that those who resigned were senior Captains and junior Majors.

"It's still an offshoot of our pilots looking for greener pastures outside the military service," de la Peña said.

De la Peña said he would have to confirm how many exactly resigned the previous weeks and from which services they came from.

The officers who resigned were graduates of the Philippine Military Academy (PMA), PAF Flying School, and the Officer Training School.

They have all completed the mandatory eight-year military service, the sources added.

The 15th Strike Wing and the 205th Tactical Helicopter Wing are the primary combatants of the PAF.

Their aircraft—from the MG 520 and OV-10 Broncos—are equipped with rockets and bombs, air assets that are mainly used in the government's antiinsurgency campaign.

The sources added that at least two PAF captains have been declared absent without leave (AWOL) after they supposedly failed to report to their wing commanders while on terminal leave and continued to train with a local commercial airline.

The PAF has recalled the two pilots, one of whom is now under custody of his wing commander.

The pilots now await arraignment by the Judge Advocate General's Office (JAGO) of the PAF, and a pre-trial investigation to determine if they should be court-martialed.

All military resignations must have the approval of the commander-in-chief.

Military pilots have found a better alternative in local commercial airlines such as Philippine Airlines (PAL) and Cebu Pacific which offer higher salaries and better benefits, as the PAF tries to make do with an ageing fleet of military aircraft.

De la Peña said that while there were pilots who have resigned, the Air Force continues to train other officers who would fill the slots that have been vacated.

But one of the sources pointed out that such resignations would still have a negative impact on the PAF.

"While the Air Force won't run out of pilots, the PAF will have a shortage of experienced pilots," the source noted, adding that the PAF has obviously become a training ground for future commercial pilots at the "expense of the government."

Army chief denies military abducted activists

ARMY CHIEF LT. GEN. ROMEO TOLENTINO denied that government security forces were abducting activists and said the allegations were a stunt by communist rebels.

"Isn't it illegal to abduct people? That is almost kidnapping... We do not do that," he said.

He said the 12 missing activists whose families have accused military agents of abducting them between May and June were not in the Army's custody.

"There are no reports reaching me that we have civilians under our custody. What we have under custody are the Magdalo group (of junior officers charged with the 2003 Oakwood mutiny) and those who attempted a coup d'etat last February," Tolentino said.

"They should file charges if they have evidence," he said.

The missing activists' families and militant groups have filed separate petitions for habeas corpus before the Supreme Court, asking the high court to compel the military to produce them.

Tolentino said the families should also check with the communist New People's Army.

He said that in one case the Army looked into of a suspected NPA rebel who was supposedly missing for two years, "we found that he was just in hiding. We don't know how they were hiding him."

The disappearance of activists "might be of their [the NPAs] own creation and they are just hiding these people because they are their members."

"You know, we see a connection between militant groups and the NPA," Tolentino said.

He said dissidents might be hiding a member who had joined the NPA or that they might be hiding a guerrilla who had been discovered among their ranks.

The military has long accused leftist groups of being fronts for the NPA rebels.

Dona Pazzibugan

Form independent body to probe killings, GMA urged

By Maurice Malanes
PDI Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—INTERNATIONAL INDIGEnous rights groups have expressed alarm over the killing of indigenous activists in the Philippines, with the chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples' Issues urging President Macapagal-Arroyo to form an independent body to investigate the incidents.

The Baguio-based Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, chair of the UN forum, in an Aug. 3 letter to Ms Arroyo condemned the attacks on Dr. Constancio Claver and his wife, Alice, and on Rafael Markus Bangit, a Kalinga tribal elder and activist whose murder in June remains unsolved.

On July 31, Alice Omengan-Claver, the coordinator for Kalinga of the Bayan Muna party-list group, and her husband, the Bayan Muna-Kalinga chair, were ambushed in Tabuk, Kalinga. Alice died in the attack while Constancio survived.

Tauli-Corpuz, the executive director of the Baguio-based Tebtebba Foundation, an indigenous peoples' organization, was elected chair of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples' Issues in New York last year.

She urged Ms Arroyo to remove Supt. Pedro Geronimo Ramos, the Kalinga police director, because of allegations that the police were involved in the attack on the Clavers.

Ramos has denied that the police had any hand in the attack.

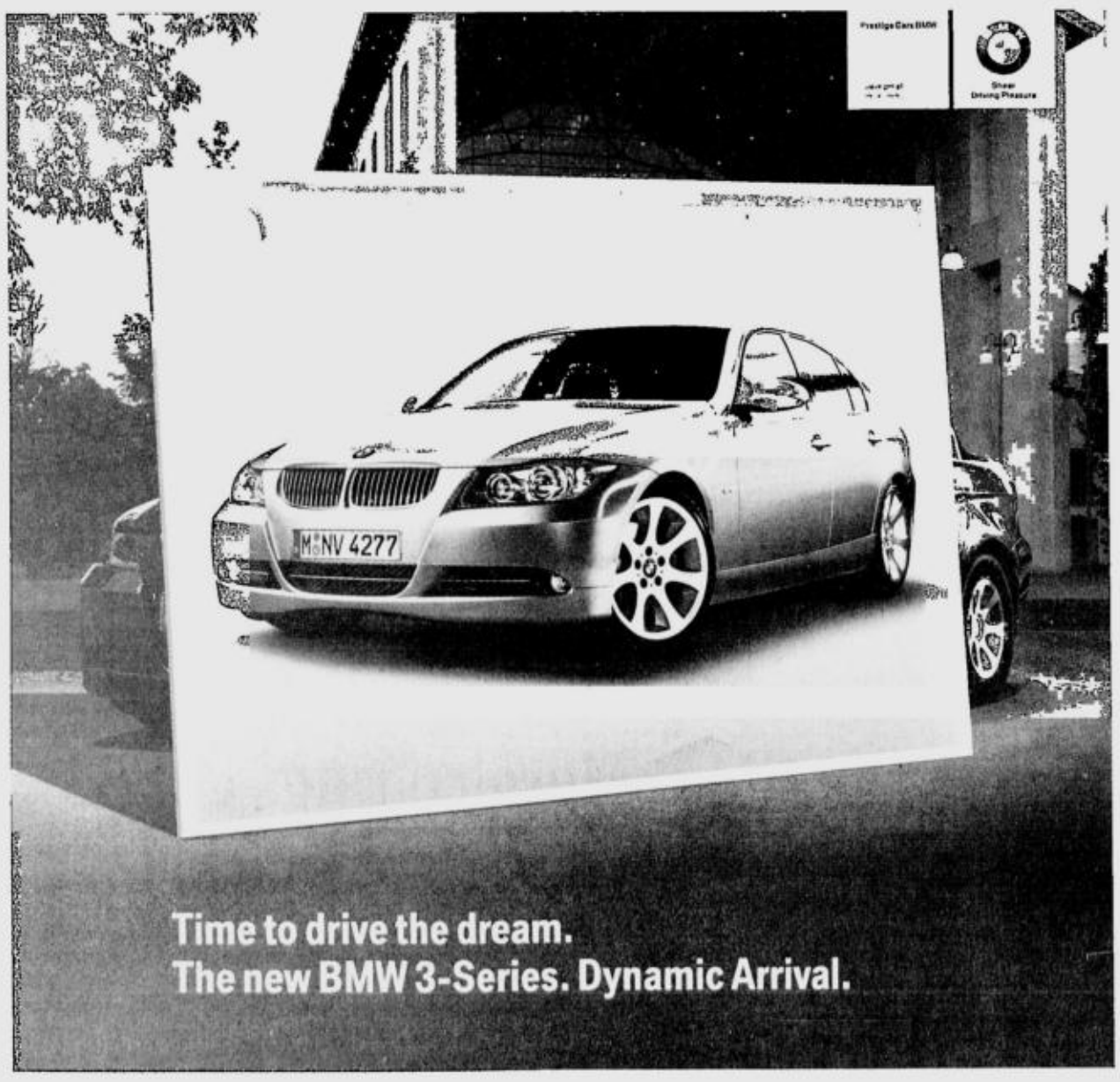
"It is ironic to see the continuing gross violations of human rights happening almost on a daily basis, while the Philippine government claims with pride that it was elected as a member of the (UN) Human Rights Council and that it has an Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act," Tauli-Corpuz said.

She noted that what happened to the Clavers and Bangit, all indigenous leaders, came at a time of the launch of the Second Decade of Indigenous Peoples (2004-2015) and the adoption of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the UN Human Rights Commission.

She urged Ms Arroyo to invite professor Rodolfo Stavenhagen, the UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples, to visit again and assess the human rights situation in the Philippines. Stavenhagen last visited the country in 2003.

The California-based International Indian Treaty Council (IITC), another global indigenous organization, expressed in an Aug. 3 letter to Ms Arroyo its "profound concern regarding what are obviously political killing, disappearances and threats of death against the indigenous peoples of the Cordillera."

Cultural Survival, an international indigenous rights organization based in the US, said it was "deeply disturbed" by the attack on the Clavers.



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I should be commended – Querubin

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

MARINE COL. ARIEL QUERUBIN, WHO IS facing court-martial for allegedly instigating a coup last Feb. 24, said he should even be commended for restraining other restive Marines who had wanted to march to Edsa last February to join the protest rallies.

Querubin, one of the leaders of the bloodiest coup attempt against the Aquino administration in 1989, told military investigators that he convinced the agitated Marine officers not to push through with the planned march.

"I feel that having stood down and convinced other officers not (to) go on with their intention is enough to merit a commendation," Querubin said.

The bemedalled former brigade commander is undergoing pre-court-martial investigation along with former Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda and former Scout Ranger Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim for attempting to start a mutiny and for conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman.

Also under investigation are 11 other Marine officers and 24 other Scout Rangers officers.

In his sworn statement before a military fact-finding panel last April 11, Querubin denied that he instigated the plot to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo during the 20th anniversary of the People Power revolt last Feb. 24.

He admitted there was a plan by "junior officers" to march to Edsa, but said such plan was merely an "intention."

"That is only an intention. If something really happened, that is the offense," Querubin told the panel headed by Rear Admiral Rufino Lopez, the Armed Forces Inspector General.

Under questioning by Lopez, Querubin, however, could not cite an instance wherein he actually told fellow Marine officers not to proceed with the planned march.

He merely cited his silence during an emergency meeting at the Marine headquarters around 1 a.m. of Feb. 24, after Querubin, Lim and Miranda failed to get then AFP chief of staff Gen. Generoso Senga and the rest of the top brass to support the plot.

"The fact that I was silent when they were all discussing (at the Marine commandant's office). And when asked, I told them to remain with the chain of command. I think it is a way of trying to convince them not (to) pursue their intentions," Querubin told the Lopez panel.

JACKIE CHAN IN MANILA

'I lived in an orphanage when I was younger'

By Marinel R. Cruz

CHAN answers questions in a press conference at the Mandarin Hotel in Makati to promote his cafe, Jacky Chan's Java.
INQUIRER PHOTO/EDWIN BACASMAS

HE'S NOT ALWAYS A "DRUNKEN MASTER," OR the comic that he was in "Shanghai Noon" and "Shanghai Nights."

Yesterday, international star Jackie Chan arrived in Manila to launch what would be the first shop in his Asia-wide coffee franchise—and pledged a portion of the profits to the Philippine National Red Cross and other civic groups in the country.

Chan, the newest United Nations World Tourism Ambassador, is also set to give donations to the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF), and the local chapters of the United Nations Children's Fund (Unicef) and UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS).

This he announced yesterday during a meeting with media men at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel in Makati City.

"I lived in an orphanage when I was younger," Chan, speaking in Mandarin, said through his manager and interpreter Willy Chan. "We received help from the Red Cross every month. One day, I went up to the priest from Red Cross to say thank you. He said, 'I'm just the deliverer. When you grow up, show your appreciation by giving to others.' I never forgot that."

In 1988, the actor—among the very first few Asians to cross over to Hollywood and land major roles—founded the Jackie Chan Charitable Foundation, which helps the elderly and movie workers injured on the job, and gives scholarships to poor children who wish to pursue careers in the sciences or performing arts.

"It started with students in a small community in Hong Kong. Then we gradually expanded—overseas, to Hawaii and Japan," Chan said of his foundation. "China is next."

He quickly added: "Although ethnically, I'm Chinese, I don't feel like I belong only to my country. I belong to everybody."

From Hong Kong, where he is based, the actor had flown in to drum up investors' interest in Jackie Chan's Java Coffee. He had to charter a plane to make it to his Manila appointment. A typhoon that had been raging in the former British Colony since Thursday had caused the cancellation of outbound flights.

Since Chan's plane was not immediately given permission to land at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, the actor was more than two hours late for the meet-and-greet with the press. He wore a black suit and pink satin necktie—and a wide grin.

"I've been up since six this morning." he said. "I couldn't stop cursing throughout the flight. It was a very bumpy ride." Whereupon, he hastily excused himself. "I have to go to the bathroom … two minutes. Please don't follow."

Chan first visited the Philippines 20 years ago for a charity soccer event. He said he could still remember the very warm reception he got from his fans.

"I used to be a nobody," he said, turning just a little sentimental. "I had no proper education. I've now become somebody people recognize." And then, snapping back, he added. "I don't consider this luck. I worked hard for this."

Philippine National Red Cross chair Richard Gordon and governor Rosa Rosal accepted Chan's pledge.

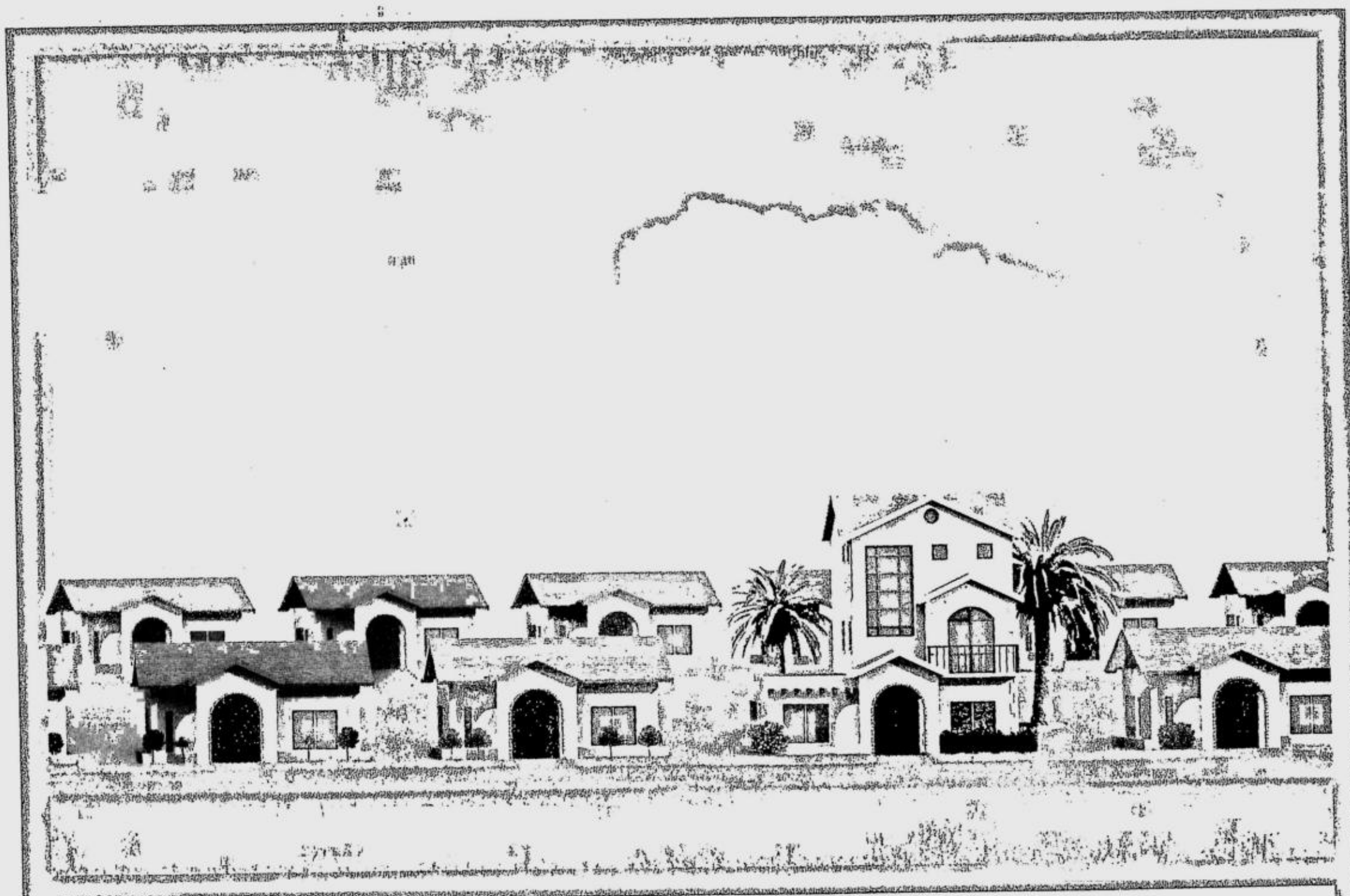
According to Yoly Ang, chair of Campaigns and Grey—the agency that will handle advertising for the Manila franchise, said the Chinese superstar also has ongoing discussions about Jackie Chan Java with parties in Singapore, Hong Kong and China.

The actor is also involved in the footwear and hotel/restaurant businesses.

Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay handed Chan the key to the city, and Unicef Philippine Ambassador Gary Valenciano performed "Love in Any Language" for the famous visitor.

Toward the end of the press conference, Chan himself sang to the press people: "Fools Rush In."

Speaking of which, he was in town for only half a day. Last night he flew out again, to Paris this time, to shoot "Rush Hour 3."



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New impeach bid dead in 2 weeks, says Escudero

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE NEW IMPEACHMENT CASES FILED against President Macapagal-Arroyo will be killed in two weeks.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero told the INQUIRER yesterday that the President's allies in the House would employ all legal and political maneuvers to ensure the speedy death of the latest drive to impeach the President.

"They will dismiss it in about two weeks. I just hope they read it first before they vote," said Escudero who led the failed attempt in 2005 of the opposition to unseat Ms Arroyo over charges she stole the 2004 elections, an accusation she has vehemently denied.

The House committee on justice chaired by Rep. Simeon Datumanong is set to start its hearing on Aug. 8 to choose which of the eight similar impeachment complaints lodged by various citizens' groups will be tackled.

Escudero said he did not expect fireworks to flare up in Tuesday's initial impeachment hearing.

But the opposition expects the chosen complaint to suffer the same fate as that of its three predecessors last year but only this time it will be quicker.

House Majority Prospero Nograles had said the new impeachment complaints would "be disposed off faster the first one" filed in 2005, pointing out that even the House minority had conceded to the lack of numbers.

Nograles said impeachment hearings would not last beyond August.

The justice committee is tasked to ascertain the form and substance of an impeachment complaint and, if warranted, conduct full-blown hearings.

The committee has a maximum of 60 session days within which to come up with a report—whether for or against the impeachment complaint—which should be upheld or reversed by the chamber in plenary session.

Escudero, a lawyer, said the majority would go through the motion and uphold the complaint's form.

"It's possible they will dismiss it on substance which is not determined by actual substance but by votes, and the perception of members as to whether or not the complaint has substance," he said.

"But why can't they just go through with it anyway they claim to have the numbers?" said Escudero who has been urging Nograles and Datumanong to allow the presentation of evidence prior to voting on the substance.

Bishop accuses gov't of putting pressure on brother

By Philip C. Tubeza

BISHOP TEODORO BACANI has accused the administration of pressuring his younger brother, Manila Rep. Rodolfo Bacani, to drop his support for the impeachment bid against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Bishop Bacani said his brother was planning to again sign the impeachment complaint against the President although the campaign to impeach Ms Arroyo last year failed.

"My brother approached me and we had a talk and he decided on his own to sign the impeachment complaint against GMA," Bacani told House reporters on Thursday.

"I know that he is under pressure not to sign this second impeachment bid," he added.

Reached for comment, Congressman Bacani indicated that he was of two minds about signing up.

But he said that many of his colleagues in Congress were appealing to him not to sign the new complaint.

He disclosed that the first tranche of his Countrywide Development Funds for this year had yet to be released.

"I like to think that the non-release of the first tranche is a result of my signing the impeachment complaint last year," Bacani said.

"I'm thinking about whether I'm going to do it again because my constituents are suffering because of my decision," he added. "Will I allow my constituents to be deprived of projects again?"

Bacani said he would make his decision after the House justice committee conducted its hearings on the eight impeachment complaints against the President.

"The impeachment process should be allowed to proceed and it should be conducted in a way that would allow the presentation of evidence before those involved in the impeachment process come out with their judgment," Bishop Bacani said.

Former Social Welfare secretary Dinky Soliman, probably the only "Hyatt 10" member still actively assailing the President after the group of high officials quit Malacañang in disgust, said that the citizens among the many who had signed the complaint had buttonholed many congressmen.

But she declined to reveal the results of their efforts, saying she wanted to spare pro-impeachment lawmakers from pressure from the Palace.

But for the second day in a row, another lawyer asked the House yesterday to junk the impeachment complaints against Ms Arroyo.

SC waives residence requirement for 'dual' voter

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME COURT HAS RULED THAT DUAL citizens may now vote in local elections without having to reside in the Philippines for one year.

In a 14-page decision, the court said waiving the residence requirement may have been part of the intent of Congress in passing into law Republic Act No. 9189, the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003.

In decision penned by Associate Justice Cancio C. Garcia, the court said the decision is timely considering the likelihood that "a considerable number of those unmarried children below 18 years of age (and who are eligible to reacquire their citizenship) had never set foot in the Philippines."

"Now then, if the next generation of 'duals' may nonetheless avail themselves the right to civil and political rights ... now there is no rhyme nor reason why the petitioners and present day 'duals' ... be denied the right to suffrage as an overseas absentee voter. Congress could not have plausibly intended such absurd situation," the court said in a unanimous decision.

The case was filed by Filipino-American Loida Nicolas-Lewis and 10 others after the Commission on Elections prevented them from voting in the US in the 2004 elections, saying they lacked the one-year residence requirement prescribed by the Constitution.

This prompted the 11 petitioners, who have reacquired their citizenship under Republic Act 9225, the Citizenship Retention and Re-Acquisition Act, to bring the matter to the high court.

The court said that "there was no provision in (RA 9225) requiring 'duals' to actually establish residence and physically stay in the Philippines first before they can exercise their right to vote."

"On the contrary, RA 9225, in implicit acknowledgement that 'duals' are most likely non-residents, grants ... the same right of suffrage as that granted an absentee voter under RA 9189," the court said.

It added that in the first place, the intent of the absentee voting law is "to enfranchise as much as possible all overseas Filipinos who, save for the residency requirements exacted of an ordinary voter under ordinary conditions, are qualified to vote."

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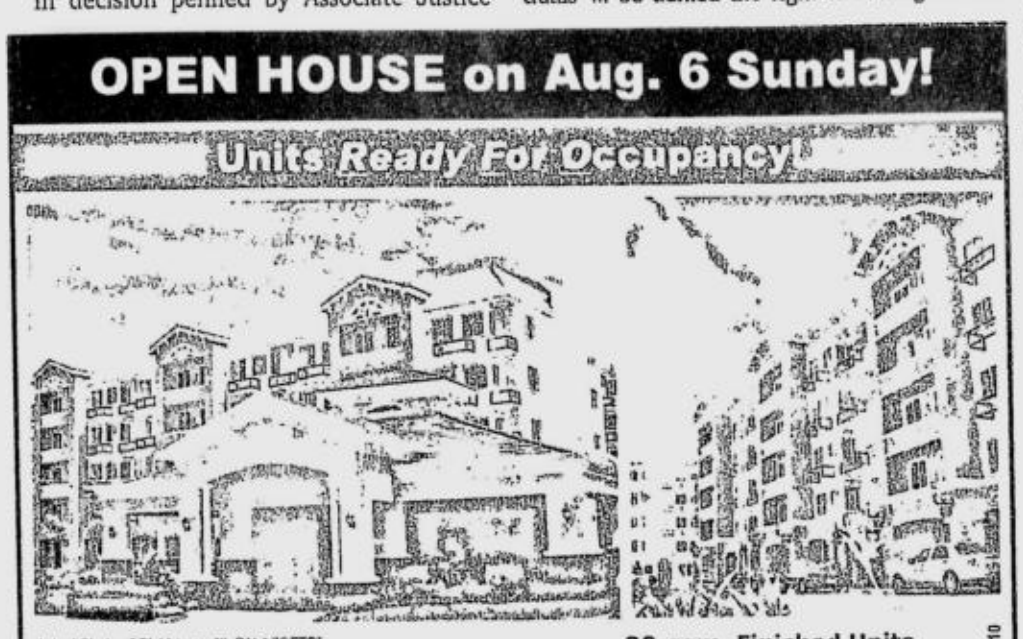

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Correction

IN THE AUG. 3 ISSUE, an Entertainment story on Page D1—"Pilots of the airwaves"—misstated that Lito Balquiedra Jr., former vice president for radio of ABS-CBN, had already passed away. Balquiedra is very much alive. Our apologies.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

3 Filipino oil workers seized in Nigeria

LAGOS—THREE FILIPINO OIL AND GAS workers were abducted in southern Nigeria Friday, a day after a German national was kidnapped, an industry spokesperson said.

"The men were abducted at Bonny Island in Rivers State, near the Nigeria LNG (gas) plant. They are our contractors and employees of Baker Overseas Technology Services," NLNG spokesperson Igwebuike Mbanefo told AFP.

He said the whereabouts of the hostages were unknown, but that the firm was making necessary contacts to secure their release.

He said the identities of the captors were also not known as no group has claimed responsibility for the abduction, the latest to rock Africa's biggest oil producer in recent months.

An oil company official had earlier confirmed the incident.

"We learnt that three expatriate oil workers from the Philippines were taken hostage this morning around Port Harcourt by unknown armed men," a senior official of a major oil company told AFP on condition of anonymity.

Four armed men blocked the vehicle carrying employees of the Baker Hughes Inc. on the road, fired in the air and then took them hostage, according to a colleague who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the press.

State police spokesperson Irejua Barasua confirmed the kidnapping.

"We are yet to get their names and other details," Barasua said.

The Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta, which has kidnapped several foreigners in the past, said it was not involved in the incident.

A spokesperson for the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila said the Nigerian Embassy was in the process of verifying information on the attack. DFA spokesperson Gilbert Asuque did not provide any other details.

Hostages have usually been released unharmed by groups demanding either money or government concessions. Two Filipino oil workers kidnapped in June were released after five days in captivity.

The German taken Thursday was employed by construction giant Bilfinger Berger AG, based in Mannheim, Germany, which was contracted to build facilities for an international oil company. He was taken from his jeep and forced into a boat by 10 attackers, according to Barasua.

Houston-based Baker Hughes is a construction and engineering firm working in Nigeria under a subcontract with Nigerian Liquefied Natural Gas. *AFP, AP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, Aug ust 5, 2006
17th Week in Ordinary Time
Dedication of the Basilica of St. Mary Major

1st Reading: Jer 26:11-16, 24
Gospel: Matthew 14:1-12

On one occasion the news about Jesus reached King Herod. And he said to his servants, "This man is John the Baptist. John has risen from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him."

Herod had, in fact, ordered that John be arrested, bound in chains and put in prison because of Herodias, the wife of his brother Philip. For John had said to him, "It is not right for you to have her as wife." Herod wanted to kill him but he did not dare, because he feared the people who regarded John as a prophet.

On Herod's birthday the daughter of Herodias danced in the midst of the guests; she so delighted Herod that he promised under oath to give her anything she asked. The girl, following the advice of her mother, said, "Give me the head of John the Baptist here on a dish."

The king was very displeased, but because he had made this promise under oath in the presence of the guests, he ordered it to be given her. So he had John beheaded in prison and his head brought on a dish and given to the girl. The girl then took it to her mother.

Then John's disciples came to take his body and bury it. And they went to bring the news to Jesus.

Commentary

The leaders demand Jeremiah's death for his words against the nation/people and Jeremiah repeats the words of God, saying that he is in God's hands, and they must repent. But if they kill him, they will bring his innocent blood on their hands. The people side with Jeremiah, but not the leaders, and Jeremiah finds protection. And Jesus has to cope with Herod who has killed John the Baptist; who thinks that Jesus is John come back to haunt him. When John is killed, his followers come and tell Jesus. Jesus now lives in the shadow of death, knowing that he too walks in the way of the prophets.

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Erlinda Buenaventura; 55

ERLINDA MERCADO BUENAVENTURA passed away in San Jose, California, USA on Aug. 4, 2006 at the age of 55.

She is survived by her husband, Moises; children Angela, Michael and One; brothers Edgar, Efren, Edilberto and Enrique; and sisters Evangeline and Edna.

Relatives and friends request the readers to join them in prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

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Honest cabbie saves the day for Pinay from Lebanon

By Jerome Aning

SHE MAY HAVE LOST HER JOB in Lebanon but a taxicab driver in Manila saved Mary Ann Balade, 24, from a double disaster.

Within an hour after she inadvertently left her wallet containing P21,000 in a cab, its driver showed up to hand the money back to her.

"It was kind of him to return it. I'm thankful for what he did," said Balade as he thanked Edwin Quines at a press conference at the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration office.

For his honesty, Quines, 51, of Payatas, Quezon City and a father of three, got a P500 reward from the grateful Balade and applause from the Owwa board of trustees.

"It's not mine. Even if it did not contain any money, I'd still return it," Quines told reporters.

In tears

Balade, of General Santos City, who had just returned from Lebanon where she worked as a domestic help, rode in Quines' taxi yesterday on her way back to the Owwa halfway center, where she is temporarily lodged, after meeting her recruiter in a mall.

During the ride, she struck a conversation with Quines and even took his mobile phone number because he had volunteered to find her a cheap cellphone.

Back in her quarters, she realized her wallet was missing.

"I cried and cried because I worked hard for that money," recounted Balade, who said she was helping her parents raise and send her 11 siblings to school.

Salary in advance

Coming to Balade's help, Owwa Center staff Bing Tolentino called Quines and told him about the wallet. Until then, the driver had not been aware there was a lost wallet in his cab.

"I looked at the back and saw the wallet there, so I drove back to Owwa to return it," he said.

Balade had been working only for a month in Lebanon when the war broke out. Her employers let her go home and even gave her a month's salary advance.

Balade said she has yet to decide if she would go back to work overseas.

Escape route bombed: Israel blasts bridges, cuts off OFWs

From page A1

cis Bichara was not part of it.

"The evacuation by land has been stalled because there is no more bridge connecting this once safe route ... It is no longer safe to evacuate them by land," De Castro told the INQUIRER.

He said that even Tripoli town in Lebanon, which he described as "far from where the military action is," had already been hit.

De Castro said the task force was considering at least three sea evacuation routes—from Lebanon to Cyprus, from Lebanon to Turkey and from Lebanon to Egypt.

He said the task force was seriously considering an offer of Greek shipping magnate Antoniou Antonious of a passenger ship that could ferry at least 2,000 OFWs from Lebanon to Cyprus for free, including meals.

Greek plan

Antonious, married to a Filipina, is owner of Olympic Gulf Tankers Co. Ltd. based in the United Arab Emirates and Greece, and employs seafarers and employees, 80 percent of whom are Filipinos.

Under Antonious' offer, he would ask an association of ship owners in Greece to shell out money for the hiring of a passenger ship which would cost $2 million. If nobody gives the money, he said, he would shoulder the entire amount.

But Antonious said the Philippine government should first seek permission from Cyprus for the evacuation and provide the documentations.

Philippine Ambassador to Greece Rigoberto Tiglao told De Castro that the Cyprus government was receptive to the request except that it wanted an aircraft to immediately fly the evacuees to Manila from the time they landed in Cyprus.

War insurance needed

Also, the government would need to put up $400,000 in war insurance for the evacuees, Tiglao said.

De Castro said the government might again ask the International Organization for Migration (IOM) for aircraft from Cyprus to Manila. He said Bahrain had also offered to fly 2,000 OFWs from Beirut to Bahrain and allow them to stay in one of its coliseums for a maximum of seven days. Thereafter, the government would have to pay for their air travel from Bahrain to Manila.

The single biggest batch of evacuees, comprising 450 workers plus six children, arrived last night, bringing to 2,629 the number flown to the Philippines since the evacuation began two weeks ago. The flight was the second funded by the International Organization for Migration.

The group left Lebanon well before Israeli bombs destroyed the land routes.

One of those who returned was in a wheelchair, Priscilla Ronato, 42, of Pasig City, who fractured her right leg after jumping from her employers' house because they refused to let her go.

Intensified fighting

De Castro said that for OFWs in Israel, the government had given Ambassador to Israel Antonio Modena a standby fund of $73,000 and an additional $77,000 to buy requirements for survival, such as bottled water, flashlights and bed sheets, in case the government gave the go-signal to evacuate some 3,000 OFWs on the Israel-Lebanon border.

The latest bombing incident showed that there was "intensified fighting" in South Lebanon, according to Conejos.

"(Israel troops) were trying to push the Hezbollah farther up north and this could be an attempt on the part of the Israelis to completely seal off Lebanon to prevent the escape of Hezbollah," he said.

Conejos said this would "accelerate our efforts to find alternative routes" out of Lebanon.

Ms Arroyo expressed the nation's "indignation and outrage" over the death of two household helpers—Mary Jane Pangilinan and Michelle Tomagan—who she said were trying to escape their employers to join the evacuation of their compatriots. *(See story on this page.)*

Ms Arroyo made the statement as Task Force Lebanon disclosed plans to conduct a massive information drive to reach the remaining 27,000 OFWs in Lebanon.

"Our request to our OFWs and to their loved ones here, please tell them don't take unilateral action," Conejos said. "If your employer refuses to release you, you must call the embassy. Don't attempt to leave on your own, especially if in so doing you will endanger your life."

He advised them to instead contact the Philippine embassy in Beirut because labor attachés and embassy officials there were "very adept on these things" and would negotiate for their release.

Force majeure

"Especially now there is an emergency, under our laws and I'm sure under their laws, (there is a) force majeure clause that would release them from their obligations to the contract," Conejos said.

If the Lebanese employers refused to let go of their Filipino helpers through negotiations, Conejos said this was when officials would have to "involve Lebanese authorities."

"In the next 6-8 days, we should have reached 10,000 OFWs and when I say reach that means we have actually talked to them, told them that the President wants them home, ask them to proceed to our relocation site and if they say they don't want to go home, we tell them that in case they change their minds, their relocation site is still open," Conejos said.

"From the first 10,000, we will move to the next 10,000 until we finally complete the 30,000 that the President has set for us."

Conejos said the task force would try to reach the OFWs through calls or text messages or make use of Christian churches in Lebanon, among others.

He said the task force also explored the possibility of bringing a ship from the Philippines but this would reach Lebanon in 14 days, travelling at 19 knots.

With a report from Volt Contreras

War knows no kibitzers, DH learns the hard way

From page A1

with the help of total strangers.

She was in Lebanon for less than two weeks.

Ecoy said she began working as a DH for a Lebanese-Australian household in Beirut last July 11. On her fourth day, she saw bombs hitting buildings near where their house stood on a mountainous portion of Beirut.

"We all hid inside the toilet," Ecoy told the INQUIRER.

About three days later, they all packed up and left. By July 22, a military ship had brought them and hundreds of other evacuees to neighboring Cyprus.

Two Annas

It was at a port in Cyprus, Ecoy said, that her employers—who had Australian passports—left her on her own.

Sensing Ecoy to be lost, a Cypriot woman she could only identify as "Anna" offered her shelter and took care of her for about a week.

Anna gave her pocket money before turning her over to members of the Filipino community in Nicosia. Two of them—another woman named "Anna" and her husband Rex—took her into their home while the Philippine Embassy in Greece arranged her flight back to Manila.

She had $110 in her pocket when she arrived yesterday—courtesy of the "strangers" who took care of her in Cyprus.

Still bubbly for someone who had gone through an evacuee's ordeal, Ecoy wryly noted that her two-year contract as a DH had abruptly ended "without (my) even reaching my first payday." She was expecting to get $200 a month.

Summer mementoes

And what does she, who has an 8-year-old daughter to feed, have to show for her Mediterranean odyssey?

She rolled up her sleeves and showed several fresh insect bites on her arm—"summer souvenirs" from her brief stay in Cyprus.

About 30,000 other overseas Filipino workers remain trapped in Lebanon. Two others, both domestic helpers, have died but in incidents not directly related to the war, officials reiterated.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration said it would assist the families of the two Filipinas who died.

Both Mary Jane Pangilinan, 24, of Tondo, Manila, and Michelle Tomagan of Angono, Rizal were Owwa members and their families will receive P200,000 in life insurance benefits and another P20,000 as burial assistance, Owwa Administrator Marianito Roque said.

How they died

Pangilinan and Tomagan fell to their deaths on July 26 and 28 respectively from the apartments of their employers.

Reports said that Tomagan fell from the apartment when she tried to escape her employer while Pangilinan fell while cleaning a window.

In a statement she read at a news conference in Malacañang, the President also appealed to the employers of Filipinos and the Lebanese government to "guarantee their freedom to travel and escape harm."

She said she was watching the "evacuation timeline" and vowed the crisis team would go "house to house if needed" so as to get in touch to the remaining 27,000 Filipinos in Lebanon.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos said that Tomagan sustained "fracture of the vertebrae arising from a fall from a high place," while Pangilinan died as a result of "hemorrhage due to a fall from a high place."

"Although in the case of Michelle (Pangilinan), there was a report about bed sheets tied to the balcony which the police initially concluded must have been an attempt to leave the house," Conejos said.

Maltreated

Conejos said that officials had talked to the families of the victims and were informed that their kin had complained to them about maltreatment by their employers and that they had wanted to go home.

Roque said Owwa would also extend assistance to Pangilinan's and Tomagan's immediate family members in the form of livelihood training and education scholarships.

Owwa records show Pangilinan was deployed as a domestic in Lebanon only last May 15 with a regular monthly salary of $200. Tomogan was deployed as a household worker in July last year.

Plans are for the remains of the two women to be sent to the Philippines in about a week, depending on how soon police would finish their investigation, according to Roque.

Among those stranded were four other domestic workers who have been taken to a mountainside "resthouse" by their employer, according to Kanlungan Center, a nongovernment organization looking after migrant workers.

Waiting for help

Kanlungan identified them as Zulaika Limba Latip and three others identified only as Lilian, Catalina and Nurayda.

In a text message to her family in Cotabato City, Latip said her employer had taken them to a resthouse in Jabal to escape from the bombings.

Latip said their employer was only keeping them to protect them and that he had told them he'd let them go if anybody from the embassy in Beirut would fetch them.

"Please ask that somebody from the embassy pick us up so we can beat the one-week deadline set by the government for all Filipinos to evacuate," Latip said in her text message.

Also yesterday, the Owwa board of trustees approved the release of P500 million for the continuing repatriation of Filipino workers.

Owwa has so far spent $2.3 million in the repatriation, Roque said, adding the agency has a remaining $9.6 million for the effort.

Roque said 80 to 100 Filipinos remained in the relocation center in Beirut, awaiting transportation to the Syrian capital Damascus.

Appeal to employers

About 800 others have signified by phone their intention to be relocated when the center is decongested, while 1,573 have registered with the embassy but said they were not inclined to leave yet.

Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, concurrent Owwa board chair, said they had contacted Lebanese government officials for assistance in "persuading" employers who did not want their Filipino maids to leave, to let them go.

Estrelita Hizon of the Philippine Association of Mediterranean Agencies Deploying Labor told reporters most of the victims of abuses were undocumented.

"We hope these sad experiences would teach those who want to work abroad the disadvantages of going through illegal recruiters and without proper documentation," she said.

Hizon said the decision of many OFWs in Lebanon to stay behind should be respected.

Owwa slammed

"They have first-hand and reliable information regarding their own safety; they shouldn't be forced to leave," she said.

Kanlungan Center lashed out at Owwa for allegedly causing the non-appearance of two Filipino evacuees in a news conference on the issues plaguing the OFWs.

Helen Dabu, program coordinator of the Kanlungan Center Foundation Inc., told reporters that the Owwa had imposed stricter measures on the comings and goings of repatriates from the Owwa shelter after learning that two of them were to speak at the news conference.

"It seems that the Owwa imposed the stricter measures after they learned that our speakers were going to be in our news conference today," Dabu said.

Kanlungan Center had called the news conference to call for an accounting of the OWWA's billions of pesos in funds for the welfare of the migrant workers.

Counseling, debriefing

For its part, the Department of Social Welfare and Development has ordered its Crisis Intervention Unit and the Disaster Response Operations, Monitoring and Information Center to stay open 24 hours to provide counseling to returning OFWs.

As member of Task Force Lebanon, the Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said that DSWD social workers would provide stress debriefing sessions and counseling to distressed OFWs to help them cope with the emotional crisis and trauma brought about by their unexpected repatriation.

Those needing other services, such as psychiatric, medical, and legal, will be referred to appropriate agencies. *With reports from Norman Bordadora and Cynthia D. Balana*

German cops hands off sex row

From page A1

sexual obligations.

After the couple had been sleeping in separate beds for several months without intimate contact, the 44-year-old woman woke the husband, 45, in the middle of the night and demanded he satisfy her needs, police spokesperson Paul Kemen said Thursday.

When her advances were refused, a row broke out and she called the police and asked them to intervene, he added.

"The police officials did not feel able to resolve the dispute, let alone issue any kind of official order," Kemen said.

"And because no crime or infringement could be identified, all they could do was file a report in case intervention might be required at a later date," he added. *Reuters*

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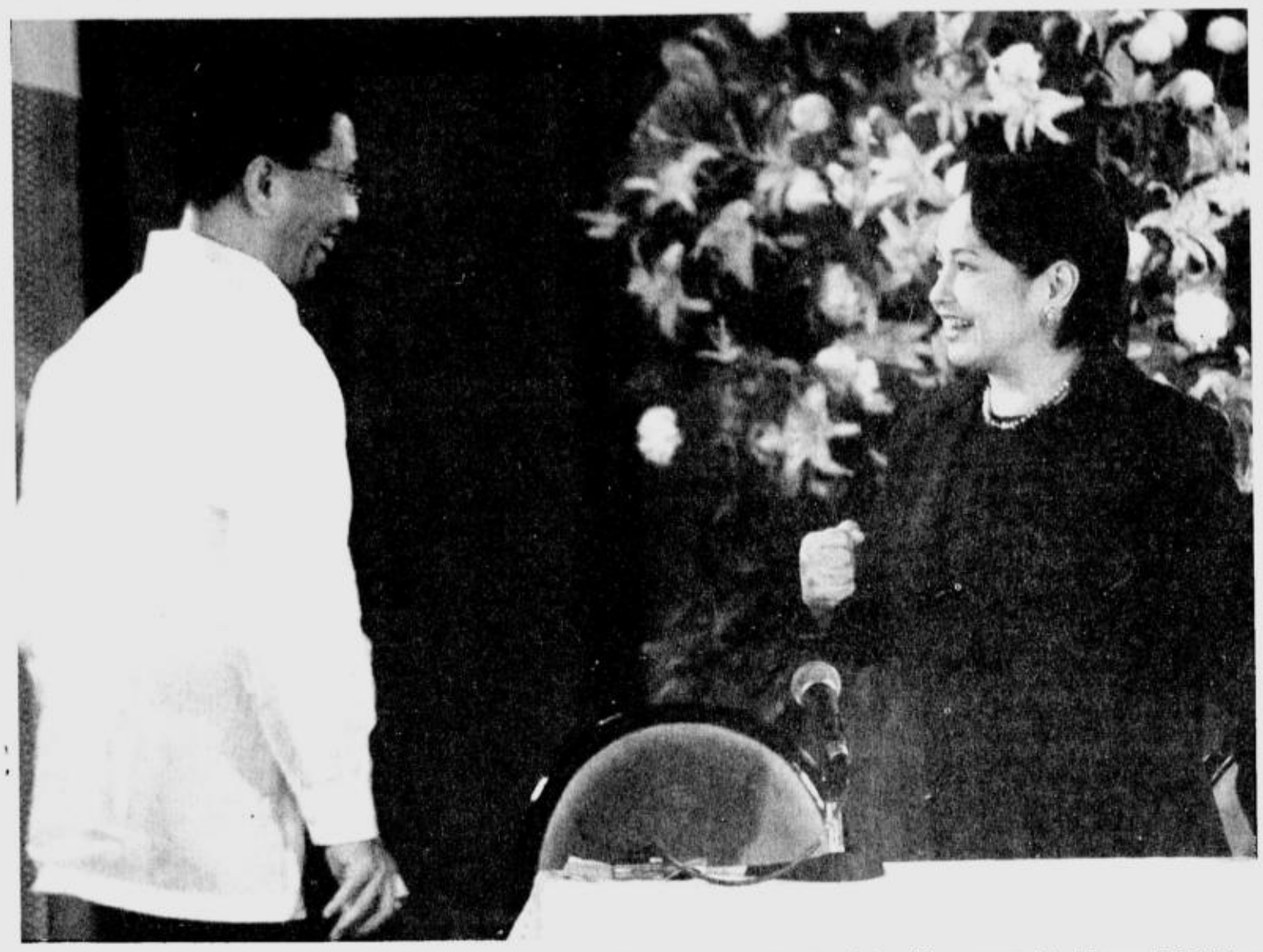

GOOD NEWS from the Palace: President Arroyo leads the press conference on the reduction of electricity rates starting this month. With her is Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla. LYN RILLON

GMA: Meralco rates cut 52¢ per kWh in spot ...

From page A1

which services Metro Manila and most of Luzon, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said.

Meralco said its customers would enjoy a rate reduction of as much as 89 centavos per kWh this month, mainly because of its participation in the WESM.

This means savings of P178 for a household consuming an average of 200 kWh a month.

There is difference between the President's and Meralco's reckoning of the rate of savings for consumers because Malacañang computed average consumption over a three-month period (May to July) while Meralco used only a month's billing period, from June to July.

Like stock market

The WESM operates like a stock market for buyers and sellers of electricity. Generation firms like the state-owned National Power Corp. and various independent power producers go to the market to sell the power they generate. Distribution utilities like Meralco, electric cooperatives and bulk power users go there to buy directly from the generators.

"This is a system that allows electric companies to buy power at the lowest price from a choice of power plants. I am glad to hear from the WESM that electricity charges will be reduced for the billing month of August," the President said.

"This is the result of free competition in the sale of electricity from the power generators. This is very good news for consumers, businesses and even workers," she added.

Foreign investors have complained that the Philippines has one of Asia's highest electricity costs.

Blended charge

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco explained the 89-centavo-per-kWh rate reduction as follows: 79 centavos would come from the reduced blended generation charge that the company used for its August billing and 10 centavos from the reduction in its system loss charge for residential and general services (RGS) customers.

The blended generation charge took into account power sourced from the spot market and from Meralco's independent power producers under bilateral contracts.

The Lopez-led distribution utility said it got almost half of its power requirements from the WESM.

While most of Meralco's RGS customers will enjoy the 89-centavo-per-kWh savings, the actual savings will vary across customer classes, Francisco said.

The 89-centavo estimated rate reduction will apply to most, not all, RGS customers, and will not necessarily be the rate reduction for Meralco's commercial and industrial clients, he said.

Maximum earnings

This amount is also the maximum possible savings that Meralco customers will experience for this billing cycle, Francisco said.

Lotilla said Luzon power users outside the Meralco franchise would also enjoy some savings as Napocor's time-of-use (TOU) rates usually go down during the wet season, or the six months from July to December.

From P4.0753 per kWh in the January-June period, Napocor's TOU rate would go down by 35.12 centavos per kWh from July to December as hydropower plants produce more electricity, he said.

For the hydropower-dependent Mindanao grid, Lotilla said average TOU rates would drop by 27.58 centavos per kWh, or from P2.2448 per kWh during the dry season to only P1.969 per kWh during the wet season.

No adjustments will be made in the Visayas grid, however, as TOU rates there do not vary between seasons.

The Visayas grid does not have enough hydropower capacity to warrant rate changes between seasons, the energy secretary explained.

The TOU scheme provides Napocor customers with flexible hourly rates that are lowest during off-peak hours, or between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., and highest during peak hours, or from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sundays and holidays are also considered off-peak times.

Rates are also lower during the wet season, or from July to December, as electricity demand usually falls during this time because of the colder weather.

Hydroelectric plants are also able to produce more power during these months.

Meralco warning

Francisco warned, however, that Meralco customers could experience some increases next month as Napocor's generation rate adjustment mechanism (Gram) and incremental currency exchange rate adjustment (Icera) will begin to be reflected on Meralco's generation charge in September.

While savings can be expected in the second month of Meralco's participation in the WESM, the Gram and Icera will add a little to its generation charge next month, he said.

Residential customers will continue to enjoy the mandated rate reduction (MRR) of 30 centavos per kWh, as provided for in the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001.

This would be despite an Energy Regulatory Commission resolution excluding from the MRR's scope power traded by Napocor in the WESM that was not covered by any transition supply contracts (TSCs).

ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. explained that the ERC was concerned that the MRR would distort the price of Napocor power traded in the electricity spot market.

But since most distribution utilities had TSCs with Napocor, a large number of residential customers would still enjoy the MRR, he said. *With a report from AFP*

Bolante transfer to Chicago delaying tactic, says expert

From page A1

He said he had also been informed that Bolante was to be moved to a detention facility in Maywood, about 12 miles from Chicago. The scheduled court hearing on Aug. 24 has also been cancelled, he said.

"The petition [for court transfer] was definitely a delaying tactic," said the asylum law expert who requested anonymity because he was jointly working on a case with a member of the law firm representing Bolante.

He expressed surprise that the judge, D.D. Sitgraves, had allowed the venue transfer.

Fleeing the limelight

The law firm representing Bolante is based in Chicago, Roque said in a phone conversation with the INQUIRER in Manila.

Bolante's lawyer, Christian Schmidt, is a member of the law firm Azulay, Horn and Seiden, LLC—the largest immigration law firm in Chicago and the fourth largest in the United States.

Roque said Bolante might have also wanted the case transferred to Chicago to elude Filipino-American reporters.

"His goal could be to flee the limelight. Most of the Filipino media here are based in LA. It could be difficult for them to follow up the case in Chicago," Roque said, adding:

"And the Filipino community here in Chicago is smaller compared to California. Having the case there would have generated a lot of publicity."

Roque said Bolante would also be more comfortable in Chicago because he had relatives there.

Rotary International—where Bolante served as treasurer—is also based in America's famous Windy City.

Devil's advocate

But despite the transfer, Roque said he was confident that US immigration authorities would eventually deny Bolante's asylum application.

He said the Chicago-based Fil-Am lawyer Maricar Madrid would follow up the case and coordinate with the trial attorney from Homeland Security who would act as the "devil's advocate" in the asylum hearings.

"[Madrid] will provide the trial attorney copies of the [Philippine] Senate's investigation and Commission on Audit reports on the fertilizer fund scam to press our case," he said.

Roque said members of the Fil-Am community in Chicago were also preparing to hold pickets outside the immigration court once the asylum hearings began.

"The Filipinos here are preparing to hold protest actions to show their disgust and opposition to his asylum bid. They want him sent back to the Philippines," Roque said.

Bolante is believed to have engineered the distribution to administration allies of P728 million in fertilizer funds, purportedly to ensure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in the 2004 presidential polls.

He was arrested at the Los Angeles International Airport on July 7 for supposedly carrying a cancelled B1/B2 visa. The reason for the visa cancellation remains a mystery.

Bolante was subsequently detained at the San Pedro Detention Center on Terminal Island, about 30 miles from LA.

He is believed to have requested political asylum, supposedly because the New People's Army, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, was targeting him for his involvement in the fund scam that hurt the farmers.

But CPP spokesperson Gregorio Rosal said Bolante's claim of being on the NPA hit list was a ploy to boost his eligibility for asylum.

Evading prosecution

In the 40-page amicus brief scheduled to be filed with the Chicago immigration court on Friday, UP lawyers asked the court to deny Bolante's request for asylum, arguing that he "does not qualify as a refugee under US law and international law."

"Neither has he shown proof of a well-founded fear of persecution on account of his political opinion," they said.

"We hope to tell the judge that the real reason behind Mr. Bolante's petition is to evade criminal prosecution," said Roque, who drafted the document along with former UP College of Law deans Raul Pangalangan and Merlin Magallona (also a former foreign undersecretary) and Romel Bagares (like Roque, a member of the UP Law Center-Institute of International Legal Studies).

"[Granting] Mr. Bolante's request would defeat the demands and ends of justice in his home country, where he is being sought for direct complicity in a corruption scandal that has rocked the highest public offices in the Philippines, including the Office of the President," the petitioners said.

'Fugitive' from justice

"Also, his request for asylum constitutes an abuse of a right that should not be countenanced by any Receiving State under international law," they said, adding:

"He being a fugitive from Philippine justice being sought for his complicity in a corruption scandal in which he played a key role as a ranking official of the Philippine Department of Agriculture, the applicant does not fall under the meaning of a 'refugee' eligible for a grant of asylum under both US law and jurisprudence and international law."

Sis, cousin say GMA 'the healthiest among us'

From page A1

President had always been in the pink of health even as a child.

"She [had surgery] on her hand, but that was a long time ago," Salgado said of the "most serious" medical procedure that her sister had undergone.

"If she is sick, her doctor and her daughter would know," Salgado said.

Ms Arroyo was radiant in a black suit when she appeared on TV yesterday to dispel persistent rumors that she was ailing.

Her appearance at a morning briefing should disprove speculations floated by the opposition as part of its efforts to "destabilize" her administration, according to her chief of staff Michael Defensor.

Those wondering about the state of Ms Arroyo's health will have to make do with past medical bulletins because Malacañang maintains it is not compelled to disclose more than what her physicians have announced.

"We don't have authority on [the President's health status]. It's her doctors who will settle that, as and when needed. [Those asking questions] can get in touch with the doctors," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said in an interview, adding that Ms Arroyo was maintaining her right to doctor-patient confidentiality.

"Of course, there are protocols there. That is the job of the President's physicians. We will not be the ones who will release [the results of her physical examination]," Bunye said.

Stress

Speculations about the President's health have been swirling, with her confinement at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City twice in 35 days—on June 22 for stomach pains and severe diarrhea and on July 27 for flu.

Malacañang officials led by Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita have denied rumors that Ms Arroyo was afflicted with an ailment more serious than flu or diarrhea.

Ms Arroyo herself has yet to directly address the matter beyond saying she was OK.

On Thursday, Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap denied a report that Ms Arroyo had a "fatty liver"—a condition caused by a buildup of excess fat in the liver cells.

But Naty Tuason said "stress" had caused the President's hospitalization.

"It is stress from all the things happening that has affected her stomach, her health," Tuason said.

Tuason last saw Ms Arroyo during the Tuason family reunion held at the house of another cousin, Nene Quimson, in La Vista, Quezon City, early this year.

"She was in good spirits and in good health. She stayed and chatted with us," Tuason said, adding that she had kept regular communication with the First Couple through the President's husband.

Mike Arroyo invited "all first cousins" to a trip to Hong Kong in February as part of the family reunion, "but the President did not join us," Tuason said.

Transparency

At a briefing, Defensor echoed Bunye's statement that Malacañang was not in a position to disclose the stafe of the President's health.

"All of those [medical bulletins] are transparent, and the Palace has not intervened in any of them because we want the doctors themselves to [make the announcements]," he said.

Defensor said there was no urgent need for Ms Arroyo to undergo an executive checkup: "The doctors have given more time to the President and she'd probably have a checkup sometime in the last quarter of this year."

He said that the stock market and the peso remained resilient amid rumors of a seriously ill leader, and that investors had confidence in the President.

Defensor also said Ms Arroyo handled her illness far better than did President Ferdinand Marcos, who was under dialysis in his final days in office and raised speculation that someone else was running the government.

"The President is transparent. She has been rushed to the hospital twice and we have not hidden this, and her doctors have freely given out medical bulletins," he said.

Adding 2 and 2 together

Over radio dzRH, Ermita said he could not confirm whether Ms Arroyo's physicians had diagnosed her as having a fatty liver based on her recent physical examination.

A Malacañang insider said Ms Arroyo had lost at least five pounds since her doctors ordered her to slim down after her bout of diarrhea in June.

But Ermita said people were just adding two and two together to make their own conclusions.

"The President is an important personality. It's no surprise that people speculate on her health when a specialist doctor looks after her," he said.

He reiterated that contrary to the rumors, Ms Arroyo was in excellent health and even had a special exercise regimen once a day, several times a week.

"How can you say she is sick when she just presided over a Cabinet meeting from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.?" he said.

Ermita pointed out that Ms Arroyo's healthy appetite was also proof that she was not sick.

"A person who is ill has no taste buds. A person who is sick cannot lie about his health, especially if he has lost his appetite. The President has maintained her appetite," he said.

Full disclosure

But the Senate's "resident" doctor, Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier, added his voice to those saying that Ms Arroyo should make a full disclosure of the state of her health once and for all.

Flavier said that while he believed the speculations about Ms Arroyo having a serious liver ailment were exactly that, he was echoing the call of other senators for transparency.

"All these are just conjectures, we have to give her the benefit of the doubt. But nobody believes anybody because of the lack of transparency. So I'm in favor of full disclosure to the public of the President's condition," he said in a phone interview.

Flavier said Ms Arroyo's doctors were the competent authorities to release her medical records and discuss their findings to settle the prevailing uncertainty.

But he said the doctors would only do that if their patient gave her permission.

"It's the President's call and [that] of her handlers," said Flavier, a ranking member of the ruling Lakas-NUCD and a former health secretary.

He said the speculations were not doing Ms Arroyo or the country any good.

"It's doing her damage and it erodes confidence in the country," he said.

Roco's problem

Flavier said the late Sen. Raul Roco had a similar problem—a serious illness that was kept from the public until well into the 2004 election campaign, where he was one of the favorite candidates.

According to Flavier, Roco and his team kept his prostate problem a secret because it would undermine his candidacy, but it eventually affected his popularity.

"Imagine [if he won] and one year later we did not have a President," Flavier said. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana*

Palace defends GMA right to play media favorites

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO HAS the right to choose which media entities to grant interviews to, including the interviewers and other circumstances like the place, date and time, Malacañang said on Thursday.

"In the same manner that you have freedom of speech or freedom of the press, the interviewee has the right to choose the interviewer in a manner that he or she deems fit.. That's part of the freedom of speech—the freedom not to speak. It goes both ways," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

The day before, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita disputed allegations the President selected only friendly media outlets for her interviews, shutting out broadcast and print journalists who were critical of her.

Bunye said the media was "over-blowing" the President's decision to be choosy in granting interviews.

"If you do not want to accept that, she's not the only source of news, you have other sources of news," said Bunye, citing Ermita and other Cabinet officials who were the President's alter egos and could speak for her.

"That's the reason she has a spokesperson. If the principal is not available, then the second best source should be interviewed," he said.

Bunye said journalists should accept as "fact and not something new" that the President had been selective about her interviews, although he added that this would not be permanent.

Journalists covering the President had complained after the Philippine Star and the government television station NBN-4 were given exclusive interviews by Ms Arroyo in her hospital room during her latest confinement at St. Luke's Medical Center last week.

The President had the flu and was rushed to the hospital on the advice of the Malacañang physician.

Bunye said most of the time it was the President who chose who to grant interviews to, but he refused to say who had given the order to allow only the Star and NBN-4 access to the President at St. Luke's.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor had told journalists staking out the hospital entrance that a media pool would be allowed to interview the President in her suite.

Among the broad sheets, Bunye then reportedly decided only the Star would interview the President after its publisher had supposedly requested it and because Ms Arroyo was going to miss the newspaper's 20th anniversary celebration that night.

That left the other print, radio and television journalists fuming.

"I acted on what I believed were the instructions," Bunye said.

ERMITA: That's not true

BUNYE: That's the fact

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Aug. 10 (Thursday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm The Latest Time Record System Has Finally Arrived! by DAVID LINK MLA CORP.; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm High Impact Presentation by GAKKEN; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Business Can Be Simple by CANON MKTG.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Asset Tracking - A Better Solution by CHASE TECHNOLOGIES
Aug. 11 (Friday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Nestle Food Services - Your Total Office Solutions Provider by PHIL. VENDING; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm eCommunicator Bank SMS Gateway Application by MANNASOFT; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Microphone Seminar by EVI PHILS.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Stop Seeing the World in Black & White by UBB
Aug. 12 (Saturday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Wireless Presentation by MICRODATA; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Interactive World of Business Touch Screen Board for Effective Product Presentation by QUALIPLUS INT'L.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH
Seminar Room 3: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Digidesign Pro-tools System by CHALLENGE SYSTEM; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Sound Solutions by AUDIO BY DESIGN; 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Philippe Cables & Sound Accessories 2006 by PHILIPPE GADGET & ACCESSORIES, INC.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm NEXT MOBILE INC
Seminar Room 3: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm VoIP c/o U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Lupro Wireless Microphone System by MICROACOUSTIC; 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Sennheiser by STAGE CRAFT INT'L.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Periopo Routing System by FORSC INC. INK
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Aug 11 (Fri.) 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Understanding Signal Processing in a DAW System; 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm Digital Platform in Sound System Integration
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US cuts off terrorist money flow ...

From page A1

charity has operations in more than 20 countries in Africa, Europe, Asia and the Middle East, the department said.

The action also covers Abd Al Hamid Sulaiman Al-Mujil, who is the executive director of the charity's Eastern Province branch in Saudi Arabia.

The department's action means that any assets found in the United States belonging to Al-Mujil or to the Philippine and Indonesian branches of the charity will be frozen. Americans also are forbidden from sending money or otherwise doing business with them.

The IIRO was established in 1978 in Jeddah and its Philippine branch was established in 1988 in Marawi City, and incorporated in 1993 with Mohammad Jamal Khalifa, a brother-in-law of international terrorist leader Osama bin Laden, among its incorporators, according to an intelligence document of the Philippine National Police.

The PNP document also named the IIRO as a "frontrunner" of the "Balik Islam" movement in the Philippines. It said the IIRO "encourages non-Muslim Filipinos to embrace the Muslim faith."

The Treasury Department said that Al-Mujil has been called the "million-dollar man" for his financial support of Islamic militant groups. He allegedly provided money to the al-Qaida terror network and is considered a major fundraiser for two al-Qaida-affiliated terrorist groups in Southeast Asia—Abu Sayyaf Group and Jemaah Islamiyah, the department said.

The department also alleged that, among other things, the charity's offices in the Philippines raised money for the Abu Sayyaf terror group. The charity's offices in Indonesia has funneled money to foundations affiliated with the Jemaah Islamiyah terror group and has helped to finance training facilities for use by al-Qaida associates, the department alleged.

"It is particularly shameful when groups that hold themselves out as charitable or religious organizations defraud their donors or divert funds in support of violent terrorist groups," said Stuart Levey, the department's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence.

"Al-Mujil has a long record of supporting Islamic militant groups and he has maintained a cell of regular financial donors in the Middle East who support extremist causes," Levey said.

Aside from Khalifa, who is a Saudi citizen with a Filipino wife, among the other incorporators in the Philippine branch of the IIRO were identified in the document as Zakaria Shikh, a Jordanian, Abubakar Sarifadah and Alice Yabo, all Filipinos.

The IIRO was registered with the SEC as a "charitable organization" that aimed "to provide economic relief and religious renaissance to Filipino Muslims." It was also engaged in medical missions to depressed Muslim communities and provide Islamic scholarships through the Tablig or Islamic missionaries, the document said.

Interviewed by the INQUIRER in 1998 in Jeddah, Khalifa denied any involvement in any terrorist activity while in the Philippines. He also insisted that the IIRO was a charitable organization. He also disavowed any terrorist link with Bin Laden, saying he broke off his relationship with Bin Laden when he started going into terrorist activities.

Khalifa's name consistently came up when the origins of the Abu Sayyaf were discussed in law enforcement circles. Khalifa, alternately described as either a terrorist or a philanthropist, is now believed to be in Saudi Arabia. Wanted in the United States, he was arrested in Jordan and was later deported to Saudi. He was in Jeddah operating a poultry and meat business when the INQUIRER interviewed him. *AP with reports from Fe Zamora and Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

LAGDAMEO refused to sign statement

Bishops ...

From page A1

tions known on Thursday.

On that day, the sources said, Lagdameo received by fax the draft of a statement prepared by the purported organizers, former Ambassador to the Vatican Howard Dee and ex-Agrarian Secretary Ernesto Garilao.

The draft, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER, was titled "Statement of the CBCP on the Workshop with Adam Kahane (July 30-31, 2006)."

It quoted Lagdameo as saying that "the position of representatives from government is that legitimacy is a non-issue; but a significant number of participants believed the reality that legitimacy is an issue that needs closure."

After consulting with some members of the CBCP, the prelate of Jaro, Iloilo, decided not to sign the statement, let alone allow distribution of copies to reporters, the sources said.

Alarmed

The organizers were "alarmed" when the proceedings of the confidential dialogue tackling the country's "most serious problems" were reported by the INQUIRER on Wednesday, according to one of the sources.

In the workshop attended by some 30 political, business and church leaders, some participants pointed out that these problems would not be settled until lingering questions on the legitimacy of the Arroyo administration were resolved.

Apparently to avert a controversy, Garilao and company sent Lagdameo the draft statement saying that "the workshop was convened at the initiative of CBCP president Archbishop Lagdameo," the sources said.

"When will [Lagdameo] receive the draft?" a source quoted Garilao as asking an assistant of the CBCP president in a phone call on Thursday. "You give it to him soon because we need to publish it."

It did not sit well with Lagdameo that the organizers had prepared a statement to be attributed to him and appeared insistent for his signature, the source said.

Contacted for comment, Garilao merely said: "You have to talk to the bishops. Our ground rule is that it has to come from them."

But when reached, Cagayan de Oro Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, vice president of the CBCP, advised the INQUIRER to contact the organization's media office, which in turn declined to issue a statement.

Larger picture

Per a source's account, Lagdameo was earlier convinced on Dee's initiative to sign the invitation for the dialogue facilitated by Canadian national Adam Kahane.

"He signed then, not knowing what was happening behind the scenes. Now he's seeing the larger picture, that the CBCP is just being used," the source said.

Even Antipolo Bishop Gabriel Reyes, a member of the CBCP permanent council, is now reportedly hesitant to proceed with the dialogues after learning of the purported political undertones.

Reyes was to serve as convenor of a dialogue on Aug. 17 that would tackle the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal. Another meeting has been set for Sept. 13 to discuss the four other problems—education and moral values, peace and social justice, livelihood, and resource generation for infrastructure and social projects.

An eight-person steering committee was to lead the discussions on concrete solutions to these problems, one participant told the INQUIRER yesterday.

The committee is tentatively composed of Dee, Lagdameo, Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales, Secretary Ricardo Saludo, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Jesus Dureza, former Ambassador to the Vatican Henrietta de Villa, and Prof. Taha Basman, head of the Philippine Islamic Council.

The participant said organizers were still choosing between "Hyatt 10" members Florencio "Butch" Abad and Teresita "Ging" Deles to complete the steering committee.

Angered

The dialogue organizers appeared to have been angered that the proceedings of the July 30-31 workshop at the Magsaysay Center in Manila were leaked to the media.

In the draft statement that Lagdameo had been asked to sign, it was stated that the news sources "violated the rules particularly in the release of the names of the participants and facilitators, the release of affiliations of the participants and facilitators, and the attribution of names to their positions on particular issues."

The draft also stated: "We strongly regret this violation because it affects the continued participation of some people in the process. This process is based on providing an area of trust where participants can talk openly and truthfully without fear of being quoted or misquoted outside. Continuation of the process can only be possible if the participants collectively abide by the agreed-upon internal rules."

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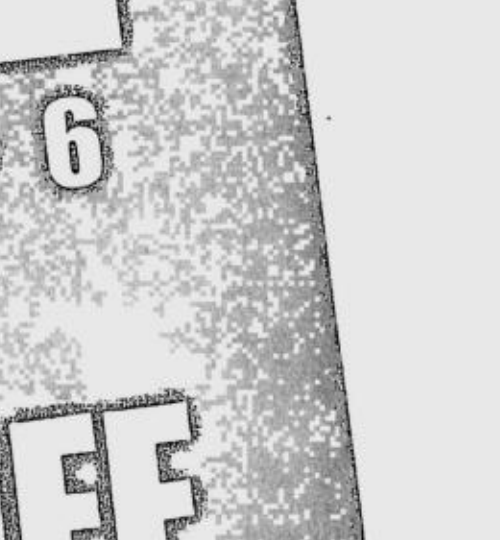

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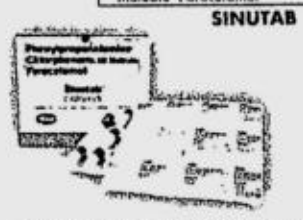

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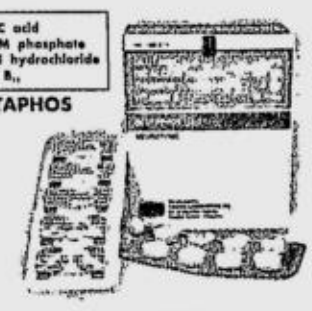
PAY ONLY 7.50

Adverse Reaction: Drowsiness

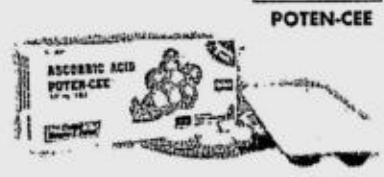
GLUTAMIC acid
DICALCIUM phosphate
THIAMINE hydrochloride
VITAMIN B12
GLUTAPHOS



GLUTAPHOS TAB
REG. PRICE: P 5.25
PAY ONLY 5.00

Adverse Reaction: None

ASCORBIC ACID
POTEN-CEE



POTEN-CEE 500MG 20
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PAY ONLY 70.25

POTEN-CEE 500MG
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PAY ONLY 3.50

Adverse Reaction: None

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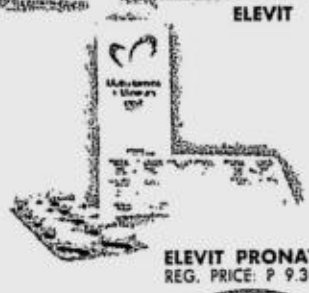
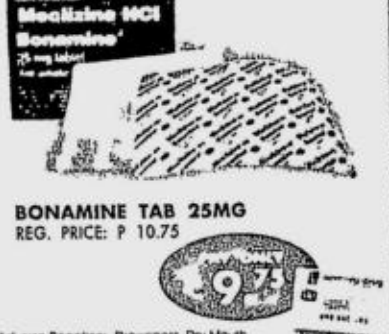


ELEVIT PRONATAL TAB
REG. PRICE: P 9.30
PAY ONLY 8.75

Adverse Reaction: Constipation, Dark Stool

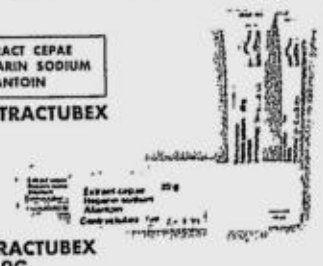
MECLIZINE HCl
BONAMINE



BONAMINE TAB 25MG
REG. PRICE: P 10.75
PAY ONLY 9.75

Adverse Reaction: Drowsiness, Dry Mouth Fatigue, Vomiting, Rarely Blurred Vision

EXTRACT CEPAE
HEPARIN SODIUM
ALLANTOIN
CONTRACTUBEX



CONTRACTUBEX GEL 10G
REG. PRICE: P 394.75
PAY ONLY 375.00

CONTRACTUBEX GEL 20G
REG. PRICE: P 695.75
PAY ONLY 660.75

Adverse Reaction: Rarely local skin reaction

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OPINION

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Truth teller

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER RISKS BEING accused of immodesty by welcoming the announcement that the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism, Literature and Creative Communication Arts is being given to the paper's founding chair, Eugenia Duran-Apostol. But really the award is long overdue. For Apostol has been holding the torch of press freedom for decades now, creatively coming up with publications that challenge corrupt and totalitarian leaders and courageously upholding the people's right to the truth. And she has done it all with her trademark good humor and sweet charm intact, and with her ballroom-dancing legs still kicking up a graceful storm.

EDITORIAL

Remarkably, Apostol started out as a "women's editor," that by-now sexist job title in the editorial room (these days, the position is called "lifestyle editor"). In fact, she belongs to that generation when females who joined the journalism profession were frowned upon. Let in by the macho gatekeepers, they were assigned to cover parties and balls and write about arts, crafts, cooking and lipstick. As lifestyle editor, Apostol was a leader in Philippine journalism, along with fellow *colegiala* dames such as Doris Trinidad and Gloria Goloy.

Martial law ended Apostol's innocent days as lifestyle editor. She turned to publishing, coming out with a lifestyle magazine, Mr. & Ms. But aware that the press under Ferdinand Marcos' martial law was denying the people their right to correct information, she put political columns and editorials side by side with cooking recipes and makeup tips.

When former Sen. Benigno Aquino was assassinated in 1983, and Apostol was, like the rest of the nation, outraged by the silence of the controlled press on the historic event, she spun her magazine to a political sheet, publishing the Mr. & Ms. Special Edition, which joined a motley of courageous press agencies, such as Radyo Veritas, Pahayagang Malaya and Veritas Newsmagazine, in reporting on the Aquino funeral and the rising political challenge to the totalitarian monolith.

Later, she put up the Inquirer Weekly which covered the official inquiry that nearly whitewashed the assassination. When Marcos called for a snap election in 1985, she spun the Inquirer into a daily so as to become the mouthpiece for the anti-dictatorship movement. And as they say, the rest was history.

Apostol's editorial innovation is unique in the annals of journalism, here or abroad. While the most dominant development in the last couple of years in newspapers has been the "lifestylization" of the front page (you get consumer and health news, even fashion and entertainment news on the front page, together with the old "hard" stuff such as war, crime and politics) she has done the reverse: inserting political and economic developments and other "tough" thought-food into a predominantly lifestyle publication.

The result was something like cooking with Tita Eggie, a merry kitchen where the smells and tastes of comfort food and searing spice were combined into the delicious but explosive tang that spooked dictators and corrupters. It was journalism that shocked and provoked, entertained and enlightened. It was journalism with conviction and grace. No wonder, the censors were befuddled. When they started to move against her, it was too late.

Apostol has always fought the good fight. She helped oust President Joseph Estrada with Pinoy Times, a "political tabloid" she called it. In order to memorialize people power, she put up the Worldwide Foundation for People Power.

Now she has gone back to publishing Mr. & Ms. Magazine, recasting it as the magazine for "body, mind and spirit," conscious that Filipinos must renew themselves physically, intellectually and spiritually to be ready for future battles with oppressors and demons.

God knows what she'll cook up next. But whatever it will be, Eugenia Duran-Apostol will remain a people's icon—at 80, the ballroom-dancing grandmother of press freedom.

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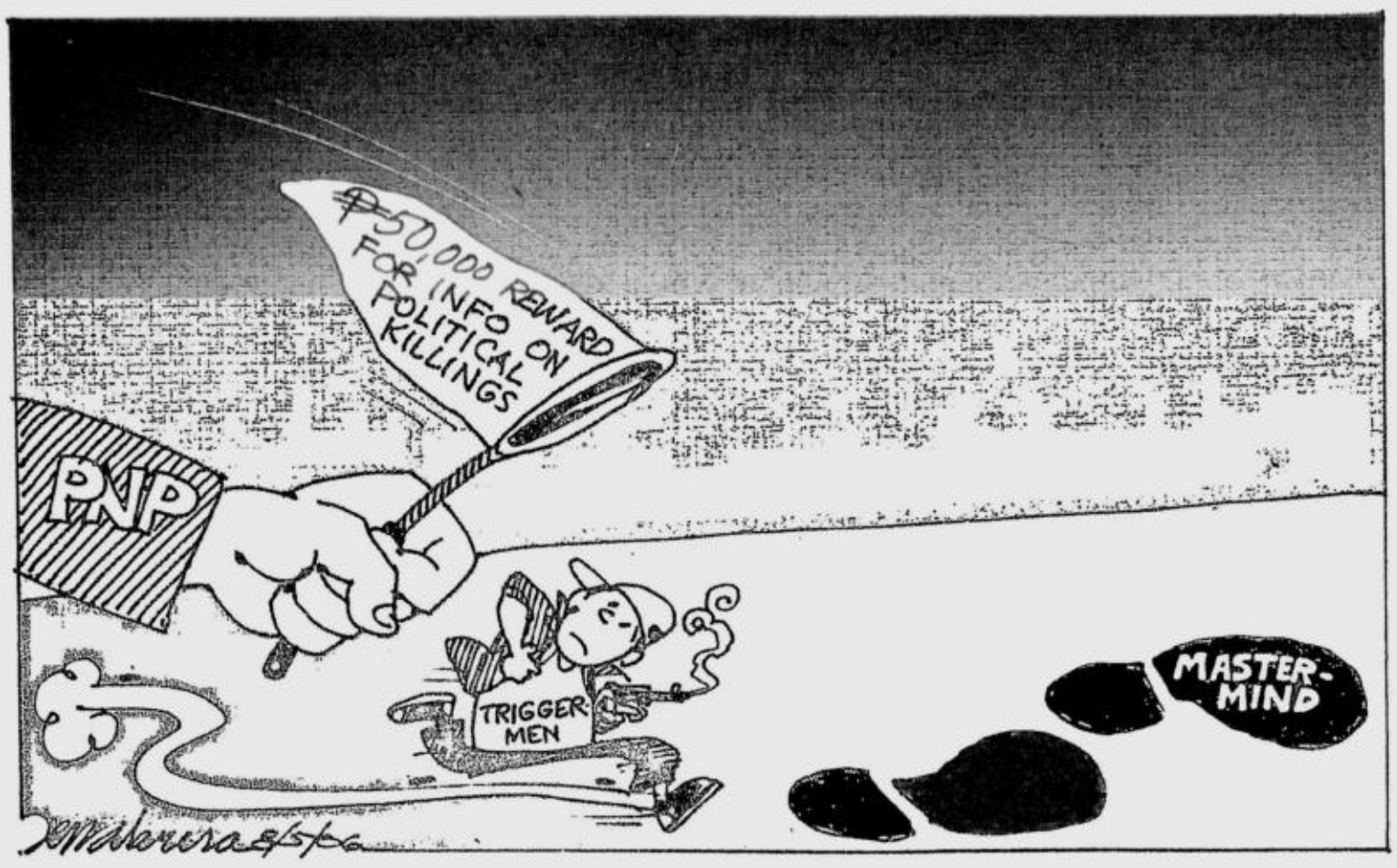

A legacy of oppression

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

THE CASE OF GARCIA-PADILLA VS. ENRILE, 121 SCRA 472, was one of the most disgraceful decisions rendered by the "legitimizing" Supreme Court of Ferdinand Marcos. With a straight face and without shame, it unctuously reaffirmed the absolute rule of the dictator, declared his decrees superior to judicial decisions and legislative enactments, reversed the libertarian case of Lansang vs. Garcia, 42 SCRA 488, and reinstated the authoritarian cases of Barcelon v. Baker, 5 Phil. 87, and Montenegro vs. Castañeda, 91 Phil. 882, held that insurgents were combatant enemies not entitled to the guarantees of the Bill of Rights, and allowed their warrantless arrests for their "continuing offenses" that made them *in flagrante delicto* despite the innocence of their acts at the time of their apprehension.

Derided by Justice Vicente Abad Santos for its "slavish tone" even while the dictatorship was still in effect, it was confidently expected to be deservedly repudiated by the new Supreme Court established after Edsa I. President Corazon Aquino's Freedom Constitution had called for the "eradication of all iniquitous vestiges of the previous regime," and the new Constitution of 1987 was categorically committed to the discontinuance of the evils of the dictatorship as countenanced and even praised by the Garcia-Padilla panegyric. But this optimism was soon unaccountably disabused.

The culprit was Umil vs. Ramos, 187 SCRA 211, promulgated on July 9, 1990, by the reorganized Supreme Court no longer controlled by an intimidating despot. Written *per curiam* by a member who cautiously chose not to identify himself despite the importance of the landmark decision, it dismissed all the petitions for habeas corpus filed on behalf of persons arrested for various acts, including rebellion, sedition, murder and others. One conspicuous ruling in the case was the adoption of the "continuing offense" doctrine that had oppressed many suspected dissidents and provoked many human rights lawyers to protest on their behalf.

The *ponencia* was supported by 13 justices with only Justice Abraham F. Sarmiento and me dissenting. We were the same dissenters in the Checkpoints Case where columnist Ramon Tulfo called the majority "*isang katutak na bobo*"—a bunch of idiots—and was fined for telling the truth. The public reaction to the new decision was markedly hostile, which must have been the reason four other justices decided to join us. These "johnnies-come-lately" were not enough to help us overturn the original decision, which now still remains among our ruling cases. Even now a person suspected of the "continuing offense" of rebellion or any associated act may be arrested without a judicial warrant even if he may at the time be innocently sleeping or praying or romancing his wife.

In reiterating my dissent on the motion for reconsideration, I said in conclusion:

"I submit that the reaffirmation by this Court of the Garcia-Padilla decision to justify the illegal arrests in the cases before us is a step back to that shameful past when individual rights were wantonly and systematically violated by the Marcos dictatorship. It seems some of us have short memories of that repressive regime, but I for one am not prepared to forget so soon. As the ultimate defender of the Constitution, this Court should not gloss over the abuses of those who, out of mistaken zeal, would violate individual liberty in the dubious name of national security. Whatever their ideology and even it be hostile to ours, the petitioners are entitled to the protection of the Bill of Rights, no more and no less than any other person in this country. That is what democracy is all about."

Justice Sarmiento, who had objected to the dismissal of all the eight habeas corpus petitions in the consolidated Umil case, had a special reason to be resentful against the abuses of Marcos and his flunkies. He had lost his son Ditto to the murderous enforcers of martial law but this tragedy did not deter him, in the leading case of Marcos vs. Manglapus, 177 SCRA 668, from supporting the petitioners' right to return to their own country. In the Umil case, however, he was less tolerant and argued spiritedly in favor of the persons taken into custody by the military in violation of the Bill of Rights. He cited facts and figures to criminalize the lawful authorities who, although they could not refute his arguments, prevailed just the same with the support of the Supreme Court.

"In spite of Edsa," he deplored, "a climate of fear persists in the country, as incidences of disappearances, torture, hamletting, bombings, saturation drives and various instances of human rights violations increase in alarming rates... It is a bleak picture and I am disturbed that this Court should express very little concern. I am also disappointed that this is the portrait of the Court I am soon leaving. Nonetheless, I am hopeful that despite my departure, it will not be too late."

Too late for what? It was our Court, the reorganized Supreme Court of 1986, that allowed the abuses committed by the Marcos regime to continue unabated—up to now, in fact—with the blessings of our misguided colleagues.

The governor versus the general

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

BULACAN GOV. JOSIE DE LA CRUZ CAN BE justly proud. The province she has been heading for eight years now is among the top 10 provinces in the country, showing high where high is desired, as in its Human Development Index—a composite measure of life expectancy, knowledge (basic enrollment ratio, high-school graduate ratio, functional literacy) and standard of living—and low where low is preferred, as in poverty incidence, human poverty, Gini coefficient (the lower the Gini, the more equal the income distribution). It ranks among the top 10 in other socio-economic measures as well: average family income, financial resources generated, number of banks, total deposits, inflation rate (low) and murder and rape cases (low). And De la Cruz, who is considered by many to be one of the most dynamic and reform-minded of local government executives, has been working hard at improving the quality of basic education in her province as the key to poverty eradication.

But there is a seamier side to Bulacan. Some of its towns lie in the foothills of the Sierra Madre where the New People's Army holds sway and they have been used by the insurgents as entry and exit points to and from other parts of Bulacan and the rest of the country. This makes it also easy for the NPA to use the province as a major source of revenue, from "revolutionary taxes" collected from entrepreneurs and small businesses (particularly fishpond operators), and from fees for "safe-conduct passes" collected from candidates during elections.

These activities are common knowledge, if not publicly admitted (candidates in the 2004 election campaign, including Bulakeños, admitted to paying for safe-conduct passes). The governor is aware of these activities. She has asked Bulakeños not to pay the revolutionary taxes, she herself has never paid any safe-conduct fees, and she has vowed to provide police protection to those at risk. But, she says, what happens is that businessmen just clam up or flatly deny that they have been taxed. It seems they have no faith in the ability of the police to protect them.

What seems to have been arrived at is a modus vivendi, where the insurgents impose relatively light taxes (estimates of revolutionary taxes show that taxes collected from Central Luzon are one-third those collected from Southern Tagalog) in exchange for their safe passage to and from the Sierra Madre and the silence of their taxpayers. And Bulacan has continued to thrive, although lately its official (BIR) collections seem to have suffered, if only relatively—its ranking among the provinces slid from 7th in BIR collections in 2003 to 10th in 2004 and 11th in 2005. In fact, it has earned awards, two years in a row, as the country's "most business-friendly province."

But President Macapagal-Arroyo recently announced a policy of "crushing" the insurgency, and her (military) man in Central Luzon, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, who has a reputation as a "butcher," has taken the order to heart (earning encomiums from her as "*hindi umaatras*" or never retreating). He has stepped up military operations and presence particularly in NPA-"influenced" towns like San Miguel, San Ildefonso, Norzagaray and Doña Remedios Trinidad (DRT), just as he has in some towns in Pampanga, particularly Mexico. He claims that his purpose is to protect local businessmen from harassment and revolutionary taxation.

Palparan's efforts are being met with less than enthusiasm by De la Cruz and a good number of Bulakeños. The latter took out an ad in the papers, asking for the transfer of Palparan from Bulacan. And the governor's disagreements with him have been well-publicized. She warns about "creating a fearful image of our province," "sending the wrong signal to investors," "scaring business away," and he accuses her, in effect, of coddling insurgents and of failure in her anti-communist drive.

De la Cruz is very disturbed by the disappearances (so far, there have been six recent disappearances, including two UP students, a businessman and a rebel returnee) and has threatened to charge the military with human rights abuses, although she frankly admits that cases might not prosper because witnesses refuse to testify or have gone into hiding. (Are people more afraid of the military than the NPA?) Palparan has implied that the "desaparecidos" were enemies of the people (communists) and could have been taken by their enemies (not the military). And while there is now a truce between the governor and the general, with the latter agreeing to coordinate more with local officials and to prevent his men from taking over barangay halls as sleeping quarters, the truce is an uneasy one.

Will Bulakeños be better off under the Arroyo/Palparan strategy than that of De la Cruz? Historical experience sides with the latter. That the Philippines is home to two of the world's longest-running armed conflicts (communist and Moro insurgencies) attests to the failure of the so-called "military victory" objective implied by the former. That is because, as the 2005 PHDR notes, "an intensified military response will typically be associated with human rights violations, casualties among noncombatant population, and the social and economic dislocations," which in turn will engender further resistance and retaliation.

Let us hope that Bulacan has not stepped into a vicious downward cycle.

Senators should wait until evacuation's finished

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

SOME SENATORS PERSIST IN DEMANDING the appearance of officials involved in the evacuation of OFWs from Lebanon. This despite the fact that Alert No. 4 has been raised by the Department of Foreign Affairs, following Israel's notice that attacks on Hezbollah areas will continue for two weeks more, and the President's "mandatory order" to evacuate all Filipinos from there. The senators' demand for hearings at this time is unreasonable and self-centered, and ignores the welfare of the OFWs. Some would label it as mere grandstanding.

Actually a congressional hearing is very much in order, so that legislators can look once and for all into the funding and other problems in an emergency evacuation, so that conflicts between Filipino officials will be minimized. This is not the first or the last time that a mass exodus from a foreign country will be undertaken. But such investigative hearings are best done when the crisis has ebbed. Of course, the propaganda value is much less by then, but the senators would accomplish more.

* * *

Someone who attended the two-day dialogue at the Magsaysay Center called me up to correct impressions in the newspapers that one of the five study areas approved there was the "legitimacy" of the Arroyo administration. While that topic was vigorously debated, the approved fifth study area, stressed this caller, was on "governance and reform," not legitimacy. He also noted that the list of participants was dominated by personalities from the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, One Voice and the Black and White movements, which are against Charter change. The "other view" was represented only by four Cabinet members—Angelo Reyes, Jesus Dureza, Arthur Yap and Ricardo Saludo—as well as Dr. Jose V. Abueva and lawyer Rita Linda Jimeno of the defunct Consultative Commission.

* * *

With the case of the military rebels now in court, it's good to recall Sen. Joker Arroyo's analysis, buried in the inside pages of newspapers last month, of what can happen to members of the armed services who withdraw their support from the President. Does an officer who announces such withdrawal commit an offense? Of course he does, said Arroyo, for when one puts on a uniform, he has the duty to obey his superior officers and follow the chain of command, without which no army can exist. He cannot break from the ranks at will and do or not do as he sees fit.

* * *

Arroyo said it has been argued that Gen. Fidel Ramos and other officers rebelled against President Marcos and Gen. Angelo Reyes et al. withdrew their support from President Estrada, yet they were not punished, but were rewarded instead. Arroyo said this arises from the well-known dictum in political science that a rebellion is illegal if it fails, but legal if it succeeds. Since the move against Marcos and Estrada succeeded, the military men's actions, which were illegal at their inception, became legal. But had they failed, they would have been punished. Thus, said Arroyo, an officer and his group who go against the commander in chief because they don't like the way he or she runs the country may do so at their own risk. The losers must suffer the consequences. "It's a winner-take-all thing, or a dangerous zero-sum game" and officers do not have the luxury of engaging in military adventurism.

* * *

Arroyo is quite familiar with the Articles of War, which govern the conduct of men in uniform. He was there with the legal titans during the dreaded martial law years, such as Senators Lorenzo Tañada, Jose Diokno and Jovito Salonga, to argue that the military justice system, which means trial before military tribunals and is designed to maintain discipline among military personnel, cannot be applied to civilians like Ninoy Aquino, Geny Lopez, Jose Ma. Sison, Satur Ocampo, etc. They insisted that these civilians can only be tried before the civil courts.

* * *

A group of women leaders who came out recently with a motion asking the House of Representatives to junk the new impeachment cases against President Macapagal-Arroyo is quite sore at the way the media have labelled them "*amigas*" of GMA. They stressed that many of those who signed it don't even know her personally and some who actually know her don't see her regularly. As far as I know, the only lady who can be called an "*amiga*" of GMA is Dr. Evelyn Kilayko, who regularly joins her aerobics class at the Palace. The women leaders stressed that they are independent-minded people who felt compelled to come out with the motion not because they are friends of GMA, but because they believe impeachment has no legal basis; it would not serve any public interest but only to further divide the nation and hamper economic growth.

* * *

History of sorts was recently scored when two noted economists who have disagreed publicly for years finally resolved their differences on one issue. Nationalist Larry Henares personally called up well-known Opus Dei "guru" Dr. Bernardo Villegas the other day to ask his support for the breastfeeding advocacy of his daughter, Dr. Elvira Henares-Esguerra, against the milk companies—a controversy that has reached the Supreme Court. Henares got an enthusiastic yes from Villegas. Actually the latter's support is consistent with the position of his two Opus Dei friends, Representatives Hermilando Mandanas and Simeon Kintanar, who have stood foursquare behind Henares-Esguerra from the beginning of her advocacy. She reports that the Court, in an unprecedented en banc decision, denied the petition of the milk companies for a TRO against the new Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) to the National Milk Code of 1986, issued by the Department of Health. The IRR stresses in no uncertain terms that mother's milk is best for infants. I support this advocacy, too.

Miss 'OTOP' and breast milk

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"OTOP" IS NOT THE MASCULINE FORM OF *otap*, that crisp, sugary and flakey cookie that is a favorite *pasalubong* from Cebu. Instead, it stands for "One Town, One Product," or "Our Town, Our Product." It has also become the name by which Trade Undersecretary Carissa Cruz-Evangelista is sometimes known by. As in, as she tells it, during the last Sona when her mother, Gina de Venecia, introduced her to President Macapagal-Arroyo as "Miss OTOP."

Technically, OTOP is a program, led by the DTI but participated in by other agencies as well, that seeks to support small- and medium-scale enterprises "which provide employment and fuel the local economy" around the country by "providing products/services distinctively identified with their origin and maximize the use of local resources in terms of manpower, materials and culture."

In consultation with local executives and private businesses, the DTI decides which product or service is most identified with a locality and deserves marketing support. It then coordinates with agencies like the Department of Agriculture (for agricultural produce and livestock), or the Department of Science and Technology (for hi-tech businesses and information-processing services) for consultancy services, funding and technical assistance.

Asked if she is eyeing the export market for the "OTOP," Cruz-Evangelista asks rhetorically: "How can you export abroad if you cannot even export to the next town?" It may eventually lead to exports, she concedes, but that is not the program's primary aim.

* * *

FROM THE strawberries of Benguet to the *bangus* of Pangasinan, from *chichacorn* of Ilocos Norte to loomweaving in Aklan, from seaweeds in Davao Oriental to "value-added" tuna in GenSan, the "OTOP" program harnesses local energy and creativity and links these with design teams, marketing consultants and national government agencies. All for the ultimate goal of alleviating poverty by creating not just jobs but also competitive entrepreneurs, self-reliant towns and a conducive business environment.

"OTOP" is not even limited to handicraft or food products, because in Negros Oriental, for instance, the "product" that has been identified is "information and communications technology," owing to a growing number of call centers and scientific transcription centers located there.

You can take a look for yourself what "OTOP" offers consumers during the "Treasures of Luzon: The First Luzon Island Trade Fair," that takes place from Aug. 16 to 20 at the Megatrade Hall in SM Megamall. The trade fair features OTOP products from the different provinces of Luzon and offers sessions on product development and on the OTOP accreditation program.

* * *

"BREASTFEEDING is a natural process," writes Dr. Elvira Lichauco Henares-Esguerra, a lactation consultant and one of the founders of Children for Breastfeeding Inc. (By way of explaining her kilometric name, the doctor requests that her mother's surname be acknowledged as well.)

"All human beings are endowed with a tremendous capacity to nurture, heal and regenerate... But milk companies, with their unethical marketing practices, have led mothers to believe that it is normal to give formula milk to infants. The WHO and the Unicef have maintained that breastfeeding is the norm, not the exception; it is the gold standard against which cow's milk is judged totally inadequate."

In the book "Woman: An Intimate Geography," Natalie Angier writes that "the more we look at breast milk and the more we find within it, the more we are driven to marvel that anybody can survive, much less thrive on its wretched artificial substitute. Yet many have." A scientist quoted in Angier's book notes, "As a scientist, I can't help but notice that millions of babies have never seen human milk, and they apparently have not been harmed. At the same time, I can't escape the feeling that nature went to enormous lengths to produce a particular food, and that must mean something."

So while nobody's saying that infant formula by itself "kills" babies, health authorities, including the WHO and Unicef, do say that for bottle-feeding to be safe, so many elements are required—the formula itself, clean water, sterilized bottles and nipples, fuel for boiling water—that in a poor country like the Philippines, the lack of even just one element can result in babies dying, falling chronically ill or ending up malnourished. And if mothers believe they are being "modern" and "progressive" by choosing to bottle-feed, then they must be aware that they are putting to waste a "perfect" food that nature worked so hard to create and is the reason we have breasts.

* * *

THIS is why Dr. Henares-Esguerra says breastfeeding, while primarily a health issue, is also a moral, political, legal and constitutional and an economic issue.

So prepared are the milk companies to protect their turf and expand their market, says the doctor, that they have even compelled officials of the US Embassy (identified as economic counselor Robert Ludan and regional trade representative David Katch) to pressure the Department of Health on the new Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Milk Code. "When (these Embassy officials) were told that the IRR was formulated upon the initiative of the WHO and Unicef to protect the health and well-being of our infants ... they said in no uncertain terms that there are ways to pressure the WHO, the Unicef and the Philippine government to back off from the IRR... It has become increasingly clear that these two were doing the work of lobbyists and do not speak for the US government because they resort to mere verbal communication ... and chose instead to go straight to the DOH in an attempt to intimidate."

Stop the Band-Aid treatment

WORLD VIEW

Jimmy Carter

THE MIDDLE EAST IS A TINDERBOX, WITH some key players on all sides waiting for every opportunity to destroy their enemies with bullets, bombs and missiles. One of the special vulnerabilities of Israel, and a repetitive cause of violence, is the holding of prisoners. Militant Palestinians and Lebanese know that a captured Israeli soldier or civilian is either a cause of conflict or a valuable bargaining chip for prisoner exchange. This assumption is based on a number of such trades, including 1,150 Arabs, mostly Palestinians, for three Israelis in 1985; 123 Lebanese for the remains of two Israeli soldiers in 1996; and 433 Palestinians and others for an Israeli businessman and the bodies of three soldiers in 2004.

This stratagem precipitated the renewed violence that erupted in June when Palestinians dug a tunnel under the barrier that surrounds Gaza and assaulted some Israeli soldiers, killing two and capturing one. They offered to exchange the soldier for the release of 95 women and 313 children who are among almost 10,000 Arabs in Israeli prisons, but this time Israel rejected a swap and attacked Gaza in an attempt to free the soldier and stop rocket fire into Israel. The resulting destruction brought reconciliation between warring Palestinian factions and support for them throughout the Arab world.

Hezbollah militants in south Lebanon then killed three Israeli soldiers and captured two others, and insisted on Israel's withdrawal from disputed territory and an exchange for some of the several thousand incarcerated Lebanese. With American backing, Israeli bombs and missiles rained down on Lebanon. Soon, Hezbollah rockets supplied by Syria and Iran were striking northern Israel.

It is inarguable that Israel has a right to defend itself against attacks on its citizens, but it is inhumane and counterproductive to punish civilian populations in the illogical hope that somehow they will blame Hamas and Hezbollah for provoking the devastating response. The result instead has been that broad Arab and worldwide support has been rallied for these groups, while condemnation of both Israel and the United States has intensified.

Israel belatedly announced, but did not carry out, a two-day cessation in bombing Lebanon, responding to the global condemnation of an air attack on the Lebanese village of Qana, where 57 civilians were killed and where 106 died from the same cause 10 years ago. As before, there were expressions of "deep regret," a promise of "immediate investigation" and the explanation that dropped leaflets had warned families in the region to leave their homes.

The urgent need in Lebanon is that Israeli attacks stop, that Lebanon's regular military forces control the southern region of the country, that Hezbollah cease as a separate fighting force, and future attacks against Israel be prevented. Israel should withdraw from all Lebanese territory, including Shebaa Farms, and release the Lebanese prisoners. Yet Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has rejected such a ceasefire.

These are ambitious hopes, but even if the UN Security Council adopts and implements a resolution that would lead to such an eventual solution, it will provide just another Band-Aid and temporary relief. Tragically, the current conflict is part of the inevitably repetitive cycle of violence that results from the absence of a comprehensive settlement in the Middle East, exacerbated by the almost unprecedented six-year absence of any real effort to achieve such a goal.

Leaders on both sides ignore strong majorities that crave peace, allowing extremist-led violence to preempt all opportunities for building a political consensus. Traumatized Israelis cling to the false hope that their lives will be made safer by incremental unilateral withdrawals from occupied areas, while Palestinians see their remnant territories reduced to little more than human dumping grounds surrounded by a provocative "security barrier" that embarrasses Israel's friends and fails to bring safety or stability.

The general parameters of a long-term, two-state agreement are well known.

There will be no substantive and permanent peace for any peoples in this troubled region as long as Israel is violating key UN resolutions, official American policy and the international "road map" for peace by occupying Arab lands and oppressing the Palestinians. Except for mutually agreeable negotiated modifications, Israel's official pre-1967 borders must be honored. As were all previous administrations since the founding of Israel, US government leaders must be in the forefront of achieving this long-delayed goal.

A major impediment to progress is the US administration's strange policy that dialogue on controversial issues will be extended only as a reward for subservient behavior and will be withheld from those who reject US assertions. Direct engagement with the Palestine Liberation Organization or the Palestinian Authority and the government in Damascus will be necessary if secure negotiated settlements are to be achieved. Failure to address the issues and leaders involved risks the creation of an arc of even greater instability running from Jerusalem through Beirut, Damascus, Baghdad and Tehran.

The people of the Middle East deserve peace and justice, and we in the international community owe them our strong leadership and support.

Project Syndicate

Jimmy Carter is a former president of the United States and the founder of the non-profit Carter Center in Atlanta.

Staying

YOUNG BLOOD

Betheena C. Dizon

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

PEOPLE ALWAYS ASK ME IF I HAVE PLANS OF MIGRATING to Canada. After all, I already have a "landing immigrant" status, which means I'm just a few steps away from becoming a Canadian citizen. My parents, in particular, keep encouraging me to return to the land of maple leaves where better opportunities, better jobs and better everything await me.

But my answer has always been no. I tell them I'd rather be paying taxes to the Philippine government, even if they only go to the pockets of some scumbags, rather than pay taxes to the Canadian government even if the taxes are clearly put to good use for the benefit of its citizens. I am still proud to be a Filipino even if most people would probably tell me that's crap.

I don't blame them actually. Who would be proud to be a Filipino when our leaders, instead of making good on their promise to serve the people and do their bidding, just keep bickering or, worse, thinking of some way to kick out whoever is in power? Who would be proud to be a Filipino when most of our roads are congested with traffic, potholed and badly maintained because the money for their repair are pocketed or wasted by some public officials? Who would be proud to be a Filipino when our country relies heavily on the dollar remittances of overseas workers to prop up the value of the peso and the entire economy? Who would be proud to be a Filipino when almost everyone wants to put one over the next fellow? In short, who would want to be a Filipino when this country, the only Christian nation in Asia, is going to the dogs?

I am not being self-righteous. I confess that I contribute to the deficit in the balance of payments by buying imported products, especially chocolates. I sometimes throw trash anywhere. I speak more frequently in English than in Filipino. I absolutely adore foreign movies. To put it bluntly, I have a colonial mentality.

But this is something which I am trying hard to overcome. Having a degree in economics, I know how important it is to patronize local products. It generates more jobs and increases the gross domestic product. That's why I am teaching myself to love Filipino products.

What I have realized is that even if I would hate the Philippines and leave it and become a citizen of another country, nothing will ever change the fact that I am a Filipino and that God made the Philippines my native land. So I must love it with all my heart.

We can choose our friends, but not our families, and so we are compelled to love them. It's the same thing with our country. It may be the worst, it may be backward, but we must love it because it is ours. Other countries may adopt us, but nothing will ever change the fact that once upon a time we are citizens of this country.

The way I see it, there are two solutions to the problems facing our country. First, we must trust God because it is only He who can work a miracle, which is frankly what our country needs now. We must pray unceasingly and beg God to bless our nation.

The other solution is a word that is now used virtually with contempt: nationalism. If only we would love our country, as we are supposed to, I believe it would be a better place to live in. All our actions will be directed toward achieving what is good for the nation more than for ourselves. I remember my professors at the University of Santo Tomas telling us that what propelled the economies of Japan, South Korea and other prosperous countries was the love of their peoples for their countries. Regardless of their past, which more often than not was marred by war, these peoples were able to revive their economies because they loved their countries enough to patronize their own products. If they have done it, why can't we?

While 20 years have passed, it seems that we still have not fully recovered from the ravages of martial law. We have let so many opportunities slip. If only we would rekindle the fire in our hearts, then the fantasy of this country being an "enchanted kingdom" will became a reality. We must have burning fervor not only during Independence Day celebrations or whenever Filipinos win in international competitions but also in every aspect of our lives.

This is where unity comes in. No single person can push the nation forward all by himself. The task requires our collective effort. We have watched together as one nation Manny Pacquiao beat Erik Morales and have shared his triumph. We have been united in prayer and cheered Leo Oracion, Pastor Emata and Romi Garduce as they conquered Mt. Everest. But unity was the secret behind their conquest of the highest mountain on earth. In the same way, unity is what our country needs to reach the peak of success. If only we worked together and got rid of our crab mentality, this nation would soar to heights our people have never known.

If the Lord wills it, I will be a lawyer in four years' time. All things considered, the future does not really look good even if I were to become a member of the bar because of the political and economic situation. But if we wake up and come to our senses, I just might have a chance of being a hotshot lawyer in a hotshot country. This may be an unrealistic expectation, but hey, we can always hope for the best. I have always prayed that my idealism will never fade because the moment it does, I will consider living as a drudgery. I may be dreaming the impossible but at least I have dreams for this nation. Dreams spring from idealism and dreams sometimes bring about change.

My resolve to stay here in this country has not changed even if it seems as if everyone I know is leaving. I stubbornly cling to the hope that one day, not so far away, this nation will be a better place to live in. A place where the 200,000 street children will have a better future and no one is added to their ranks. A place no has to leave to find employment and earn a decent income. A place every Filipino will be proud to proclaim as his country.

I keep praying that I will not be forced to abandon my resolve and migrate because the situation has turned from bad to worse.

Betheena C. Dizon, 21, is a 2nd year student at the San Beda College of Law.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

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GMA's 'believe it or not' stunt

BELIEVE IT OR NOT, PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo can do it. Yes, she can lie again and again in front of the nation. Her latest was no less than the State of the Nation Address.

This year's Sona showed how far off Ms Arroyo's world is from the world of the Filipino people, especially the rural women. She laid out big plans for bridges, airports and highways to link the so-called "super regions," but not even one to link the reality of rural unemployment and chronic poverty in the countryside.

The marginal women-farmers and -fishers have long been crying out for change in the government's liberalization policy. Imported products flood the market and depress the prices of local goods. The small players cannot compete as long as they are taken for granted by government, i.e., not given the necessary credit, training and technology support. The Sona promised nothing but further neglect.

Or did Ms Arroyo expect the Filipino people to be tricked by her long and winding roads (promises)?

Ms Arroyo said that around two million people have risen above poverty but was silent on the decline in rural employment; every year, from 2002 to 2004, an average of 2.13 percent of women in agriculture have been losing jobs.

She said that land titles have been granted but she did not mention the many agrarian decisions that have been reversed (e.g., cancellation of emancipation patents and certificate of land ownership awards). She talked about the solidarity of the family, but she seemed not to notice the struggle of rural families whose mothers and daughters have left for overseas work. She denounced political killings but gave her "blessings" to the perpetrators of human rights violations.

Ms Arroyo also supported the claim of some groups to the portion of the coco levy fund despite the fact that they are ready to compromise with Danding Cojuangco. Why? Maybe, Cojuangco is ready to assist in paving her roads which, she hopes, will reach her desired destination—Charter change.

Did she really expect us to believe that the Cha-cha will solve the problem of corruption? We remind Ms Arroyo that all she has to do is to leave her position if she really wants to contribute to the eradication of corruption. We do not forget the fertilizer scam that easy. We also wish to tell her that we are not going to put at risk our national patrimony—the land, forests and water that are our sources of subsistence—by acceding to her proposed Charter change.

Lastly, Ms Arroyo promised to relinquish the "presidency" after three years. Does she really expect the Filipino people to put up with her that long?

—LUISITA Z. ESMAO,
execom member, Pambansang Koalisyon ng Kababaihan sa Kanayunan (PKKK),
ruralwomencongress_ph@yahoo.com

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Power Center, Quezon Avenue cor. BIR Road
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

FOR THE SALE OF SCRAP/JUNK ITEMS

"As is, Where is and Clean-up" Basis

Date of Bidding: August 18, 2006

Item No.	Description/Location	Minimum Bid Price
1	Used/scrap Tires, 52 pcs., various sizes/brands, located at the System Operations Warehouse, Balsik, Hermosa, Bataan	P60.00/pc.
2	One (1) lot scrap metals, consists of unserviceable/obsolete RTU/PLC panelboards/cabinets and steel rack frames, located at the System Operations Warehouse, Balsik,Hermosa, Bataan	P45,500.00/lot
3	One (1) lot scrap materials, consists of unserviceable, discarded, obsolete and scrap office equipment/GPE, computer monitors, CPU, keyboars, printers, various junk electronic spare parts & accessories, aircon casing, motor vehicle spare parts, junk portable generator sets, telecom wires, etc., located at the System Operations Warehouse, Balsik, Hermosa, Bataan	P19,700.00/lot

REQUIREMENTS FOR ISSUANCE OF BID DOCUMENTS:

The complete set of Bid Documents shall be issued to bidders upon application and payment of a non-refundable fee of P200.00 per set.

Sealed bids in the prescribed form shall be received until **2:00 p.m.** on **August 18, 2006** at the Hilario Gaerlan Room, TransCo Power Training Center Building, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City and shall then and there be opened and publicly read.

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. Bid Security in the form of Cash or Manager's Check equivalent to ten percent (10%) of the total Bid Price;
2. Latest Income Tax Return of the Bidder or Financial Statement of the company (original or BIR stamped-receipt copy) and;
3. Bidder's Inspection Certificate.

Additional information and/or request for inspection may be secured from Mr. Jovenal Z. Darilay, Chief, TWS, at the above address or call telephone no. 981-2100 local 2205.

Issuance of Bid Documents will start on August 4, 2006 until 4:30 p.m. on August 17, 2006.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality found therein and to accept such proposals as may be advantageous to its interest.

(Sgd.) **MA. SOLITA O. ILAGAN**
Chairperson
RAMSUC - HEAD OFFICE

(PDI - Aug. 4 & 5, 2006)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the:

Project	Approved Budget*	Cost of Bid Documents
Straight Lease of an Automated Integrated Remittance System for Three (3) Years	P13,500,000.00 (Year 1)	P 10,000.00

Source of Fund: DBP Fund
*Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening

Implementation Date: Not exceeding Three (3) months after availability of required equipment

Schedule of Activities:

Particulars	Date	Venue
Pre-Bidding Conference	August 15, 2006 (Tuesday) at 9:00 a.m.	6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals	"On or before" 9:00 a.m. of August 29, 2006 (Tuesday)	BAC Secretariat, 6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals (Prospective Bidders are encouraged to attend this activity)	August 29, 2006 (Tuesday) at 9:30 a.m.	6th/Floor, DBP Building, Makati City

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines and must have been authorized to engage in **Providing Remittance Solutions to Banks and Other Financial Institutions for at least five (5) years.** Only Bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall undergo the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification procedure.

Interested parties may download these forms at **www.devbankphil.com.ph** and at the Electronic Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management. Prospective bidders may secure the bid documents and Eligibility Requirement Forms from the BAC Secretariat, 6th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, upon payment of a **non-refundable fee of Php10,000.00. Only those who purchased the bid documents will be allowed to attend the pre-bidding conference on August 15, 2006.**

The Bank reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For further inquiries, please call telephone numbers 8125702/8189511 loc. 2610

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - July 29 & Aug. 5, 2006)

LETTERS — PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Facts about a spurious title

WE REFER TO VICTOR AGUSTIN'S COCKTALES COLUMN TITLED "Overnight billionaire 2." (PDI, 7/24/07) In his column, he alleged that:

1. The house in Greenland Village that Teresita Barque-Hernandez uses is not registered in her name and that she is merely renting the property.

2. She has no tax account number and no employment history or business occupation.

3. The Manotok title was cancelled under the tenure of former LRA Administrator Reynaldo Maulit.

4. The Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court committed judicial inadvertence, unaware that the ownership of the Manotoks over the 34-hectare property had already been upheld by the Supreme Court way back in 1984 under GR L-62626.

The following facts clearly and indubitably demonstrate this blatant and deliberate perversion of the truth:

1. Hernandez is the registered owner of the Greenland property located in the village where she is residing. The land is covered by Transfer Certificate of Title No. 45719, registered in her name by the Register of Deeds of Pasig City as early as July 1984.

2. Hernandez was issued by the Bureau of Internal Revenue Tax Account No. 188-523-202-000 on Oct. 12, 2005.

Hernandez had been a college instructor since 1969 to 1990 in different colleges and universities, which include Adamson University and Rizal Technological University (formerly Rizal Technological College).

She is the majority owner of the Saint Bernadette Land Development for the Urban Poor, a realty company.

She has an ID from both the SSS and GSIS.

Hernandez is the widow of Dr. Laurito S. Hernandez, a physician, and the daughter of the late Homer L. Barque Sr., owner of a bus company that plied the Pasig-Quiapo route from the early 1970s to the 1980s.

Homer L. Barque Sr. was the parts manager of Davao Motor Sales (Damosa) in Davao City and later of the Supercars Inc., Quezon Avenue, Quezon City.

3. The Manotok title was not cancelled by the LRA even during the tenure of LRA Administrator Maulit. In fact, he never ordered the cancellation of the said title, although he found the Manotok title, on the basis of the evidence presented by the Manotoks themselves and by the Barque heirs, was spurious and, therefore, a sham. It was the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court that ordered the cancellation of the Manotok title.

—JOSE B. FLAMINIANO,
counsel of heirs of Homer Barque,
Flaminiano Law Office,
101 Ma. Clara St., SMH, Quezon City

Devalued conclusions about sex

I AGREE ENTIRELY WITH ANDREW R. Agunod Jr.'s conclusions that (1) parents have a central role in sex education; and (2) the strengthening of family ties and values is an important weapon in combating society's ills. (PDI, 8/1/06) However, I fear that his failure to back up his arguments with logic and accurate facts totally devalues his conclusions.

For example, his assertion that condoms do not provide protection against HIV transmission flies in the face of the evidence-based conclusion of the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention. According to that center's findings, latex condoms, when used consistently and correctly, do offer a high degree of protection. These conclusions are based on several meta-analytic studies and reviews.

It is to be regretted that such failure in logic and in the presentation of accurate facts had to be put on public display by a student from the country's premier university. Fortunately, though, the same university provides the ideal solution—Soc Sci 3 (Exploring Gender and Sexuality).

On behalf of UP's Anthropology, Philosophy and Psychology departments, may I invite Agunod and like-minded students to enroll in Soc Sci 3. Our country needs passionate young people like them.

But until they marry such passion with a discerning mind, understand the difference between rhetoric and methodologically sound research and, above all, have the integrity not to make claims which have no actual proof, they will merely be preaching to the converted.

—MARGARITA G. HOLMES,
margaritaholmes@gmail.com

Survey on bribery revealed nothing?

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO used the Social Weather Stations' 2006 report on corruption in the Philippines for her sixth State-of-the-Nation Address. The survey interviewed businessmen and concluded that bribery has decreased in the country.

In her speech, Ms Arroyo praised Cagayan de Oro Mayor Vicente Y. Emano for the reported drop in bribery incidence in the city "from 65 percent in 2005 to 38 percent in 2006." I checked the SWS website and came up with several observations:

1. The figure of 65 to 38 percent applies to Cagayan de Oro and Iligan City, not just to the former.

2. The figure does not tell us how much public money is stolen. Sixty-five percent of P10 million is P6.5 million, but 38 percent of P1 billion is P380 million.

3. The survey was made in 2006 over the period Feb. 18-April 27, 2006.

4. The report does not indicate whether the respondents felt secure and comfortable in giving information. One's involvement in bribery is an awkward topic; it is discussed secretly because the act is illegal. So, I don't know how an outsider can come up with an accurate account, especially if the interviews are face-to-face.

5. The SWS report was made in a political climate of fear and repression. How many people have been assassinated since GMA came to power? And we expect businessmen, who are afraid to mention bribery even in a democratic society, to be cool and admit that companies "in their line of business" are doing illegal acts? Is it safe to assume that these managers ignore the possible presence of hidden cameras and other detective devices? What is their opinion about USAID as the source of survey fund?

6. In our present political condition, businessmen, to avoid reprisals, would likely claim they are good guys. In fact, this is the SWS' finding: "The 2006 SWS Survey of Enterprises on Corruption has mostly favorable findings about the business sector, including instances of declining involvement in corrupt transactions, growing use of honest business practices, and steady enthusiasm of managers for fighting corruption."

7. Imagine the SWS conducting a face-to-face interview with government officials. We would expect the officials to deny involvement, or admit only a little and possibly point their fingers at the entrepreneurs.

8. The incidence of bribery will certainly decline if only a few businessmen are favored. If a government office maintains one contractor out of 10, the nine blacklisted firms will not give bribes anymore because doing so would be unprofitable. So, the incidence of bribery in this case will be zero. If the favorite contractor suggests an involvement in bribery during a face-to-face interview, then you have one recorded bribery incidence out of 10 possibilities. That is extremely low, and it wouldn't tell us the amount of stolen people's money.

Neither will it tell us who is giving and accepting bribes.

—ELSON T. ELIZAGA,
Amethyst Street, PNR Subdivision,
Barra, Opol, Misamis Oriental

Animals in war zones also deserve mercy

LET ME THANK THE INQUIRER FOR the article "Bless the beasts and the children of Lebanon." (PDI, 7/28/06)

It is terrible that officials are forcing evacuees from Lebanon to leave their animals behind to starve and die. Don't they realize that people will risk their lives to protect their animals? Personally, I think I'd rather take my chances in war-torn Lebanon than go back to a country that made me abandon a member of my family.

Thank goodness for brave folks (like Jason Baker) and organizations (like the People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) that step in for the sake of animals and the people who love them.

—JACKIE BAUT,
phianimal@yahoo.com

GMA's 'super' projects bring to mind Rip van Winkle

IN SUPPORT OF THE CHARTER Change initiative, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has boasted that she would take the Philippines to First World status in 20 years. This gives us the creeping feeling that GMA wants to stay in power till she reaches 80 years of age. Should she satisfy her lust for power, Filipinos will find that almost everything will be pretty much the same 20 years hence, unlike Rip van Winkle who slept for 20 years and found everything changed when he woke up.

Twenty years ago, we gave the world the People Power Revolution. Are we better off since then? The "alternative future" that Malacañang is crowing about is actually a pipe dream.

To reach First World status in 20 years' time would be the mother of all economic miracles. It took the four Little Dragons—South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore—some 30 years to rise from poverty to prosperity. A Philippine-based Australian economist said it would take the Philippines 30 years to be where Thailand is today. Thailand is not yet in the same category as the four Little Dragons.

Our own homegrown economists know that for our country to be in take-off stage for economic success, it should first consistently register a sustainable growth rate of 7 to 8 percent over a number of years. According to economist Sixto K. Roxas, the Philippines registered a dismal real GDP growth rate of only 3.8 percent per annum from 1962 to 2003. Currently, China is the only country in the world recording an annual economic growth rate of over 9 percent. Vietnam and India appear on course to follow China, but the period of phenomenal economic boom may not come again. Sadly, the essential elements needed for sustained economic progress are still not with us.

We are fully aware of the many negative factors that militate against our economic goals. Right now, we are wallowing in a morass of political, economic and social ills. We crave for moral regeneration and economic redemption. But it seems that we could never be imbued by the desire to light a candle in the midst of darkness. Thus, our hopes are constantly stifled.

There is the story of the drunkard who lost his bunch of keys in the dark but he was looking for it near the lamppost because, he said, it was the place that was lighted. Just like the drunkard, we will never find the key to our redemption because we're looking for it in the wrong place. How much more if someone hides the candle under a bushel. Let's get real.

—JUAN DEVEZA,
9 Chestnut St.,
Fairview, Quezon City

Suggested additional topics for sex education module

THIS IS A REACTION TO APOLONIO Ramos' letter which was titled "Sex education as tool vs poverty." (PDI, 7/5/06) It is Ramos who is ignorant, not the parents who don't want their children to undergo sex education.

What good can we expect from sex education modules that require Grade 5 pupils to bring condom and "*talong*" to class; and that tell our young that sex is "safer" when it's between two men using condoms? Such modules undermine our moral values and violate educational ethics.

It is not enough that the Department of Education is putting on hold the use of such modules; better if it burns them.

Instead of discouraging our young from engaging pre-marital sex, the kind of sex education that the DepEd wants to implement will only stir up their curiosity about sex. I am dismayed that some Filipinos are ready to sacrifice our nation's values and morals on the altar of economic growth and poverty alleviation.

In her column "GMA's pasalubong" (PDI, 6/28/06), Rina Jimenez-David asked the question: "Does giving life jackets to ferry passengers encourage them to jump off the ship?" As I saw it, David was just asking: Does sex education encourage young people to engage in sex? She used a wrong analogy. Or perhaps, she cannot see the difference between a stone and a mud pool.

To the first question, my answer is no; to the second, yes. A ship passenger won't jump into the sea just because he has a life jacket on because he'd face the greater risk of being left alone in the the middle of the ocean.

But does sex education encourage them to engage in sex? Yes. Much more if it teaches our young how to engage in sex "safely." Sex is pleasurable and the more we teach our young how to enjoy it without its consequent responsibility, the more they won't hesitate engaging and craving for it.

I, therefore, suggest:

1. Hire an accountant, and let the students calculate how expensive it is to raise a child, much more (for girls) when they are single mothers.

2. Let the students be aware of how their parents suffer a lot just to send them to school. Let them calculate how many hundreds of thousands of pesos their parents spend just for the education of their children.

3. Let the students know how beautiful, dignified and honorable it feels when, in the eyes of God and society, they go to their wedding still virgin and pure.

4. Let them eat food that lessen sexual urges: e.g. papaya.

—DENNIS D. BENDANILLO,
vice president, Sociedad de Pilosopia,
Notre Dame of Marbel University

INQUIRER Visayas

E-mail: inq_cebu@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Shellfish as seafood Vi.a.gr.a

By Alex Pal
Dumaguete City

MORE THAN A YEAR AFTER winning a major prize in the San Francisco Business Award Competition for his technology of transporting fish without water, Bonifacio Comandante is now tinkering with the juicy, meaty oyster, locally known as *talaba*.

"*Talaba* tastes too salty. I want to make it sweet," he explained.

In his small research facility in Barangay Cangmating, Sibulan, Negros Oriental, Comandante and his team have so far neutralized the salty taste of *talaba*.

Knowing that it comes mainly from the saltwater that is ingested in the oyster's system, the shells are placed in depurating tanks for two or three days, which makes the taste sweeter.

Now, the group is working to find a way of making it more nutritious.

Comandante, 46, who is studying for a doctorate in Silliman University, has offered a grant to fellow graduate students in coastal resource management at Silliman who are helping to make this dream happen.

One student, Bertito Riego, who is also vice president for the Visayas of a nongovernment organization called the Evangelical Business Persons and Entrepreneurs for Social Transformation (E-Best), is developing an algae to feed to the shellfish to change their taste and fortify them with vitamins, particularly *Spirolina sp* and *Chlorella sp*.

"Our fortified shellfish will have about the same vitamins contained in a popular vitamin sold in the market today," Riego said.

E-Best partnered with Comandante's Buhi Marine Worldwide Supply to introduce the concept for this new product.

'Not what you think'

The product would be known as Seafood Vi.a.gr.a, "but it's not what you think," Comandante hastens to add, explaining that it is an acronym for "Vitamins and Green Algae."

But there could be more to the Vi.a.gr.a than just the acronym.

The American Chemical society says two unusual amino acids called D-aspartic acid and N-methyl-D aspertate—sources of testosterone for males and progesterone for females—are found in shellfish.

In a World Bank-sponsored Panibagong Paraan Grand Competition held on May 26-27 at SM Megamall in Metro Manila, the Seafood Vi.a.gr.a was selected as one of 59 winners due to its scalability and for its networking with partner organizations nationwide.

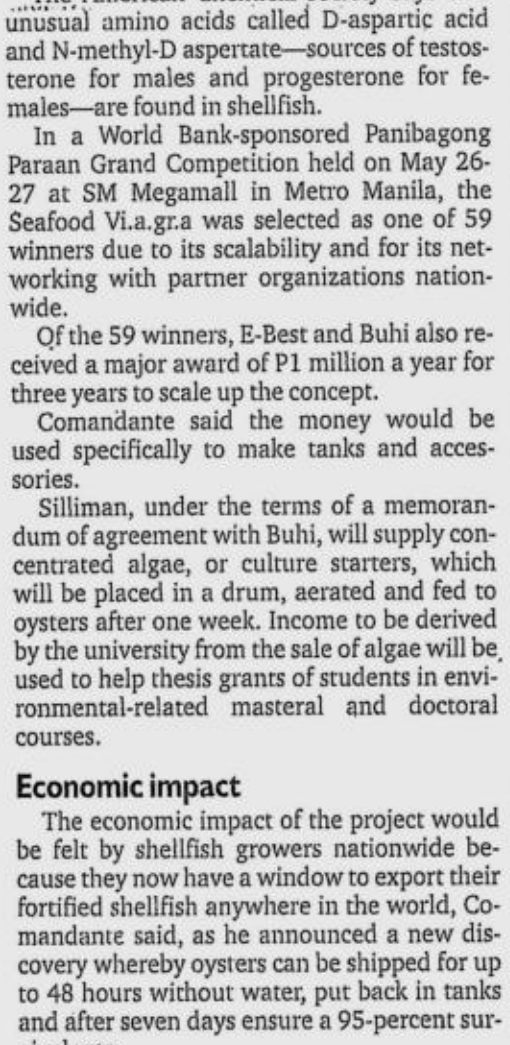
Of the 59 winners, E-Best and Buhi also received a major award of P1 million a year for three years to scale up the concept.

Comandante said the money would be used specifically to make tanks and accessories.

Silliman, under the terms of a memorandum of agreement with Buhi, will supply concentrated algae, or culture starters, which will be placed in a drum, aerated and fed to oysters after one week. Income to be derived by the university from the sale of algae will be used to help thesis grants of students in environmental-related masteral and doctoral courses.

Economic impact

The economic impact of the project would be felt by shellfish growers nationwide because they now have a window to export their fortified shellfish anywhere in the world, Comandante said, as he announced a new discovery whereby oysters can be shipped for up to 48 hours without water, put back in tanks and after seven days ensure a 95-percent survival rate.



COMANDANTE inspects the *talaba* that he wants to turn sweeter by neutralizing its salty taste.

Comandante said that aside from the breeding site in Negros Oriental, the team would be expanding to Jiabong in Samar, one of the best sources of mussels. From there, Buhi will take the technology to Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia, which are major shellfish producers.

But a lot of work is still ahead of them. Tanks are being patented and the patent for the nutrification process is also being worked on.

In the meantime, Comandante titillates his visitors' imagination with the name Seafood Vi.a.gr.a. "That's not just a name—it's a promise!"

BONIFACIO Comandante (left) explains his project plan to Alex Escano, president of the Meralco Foundation. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

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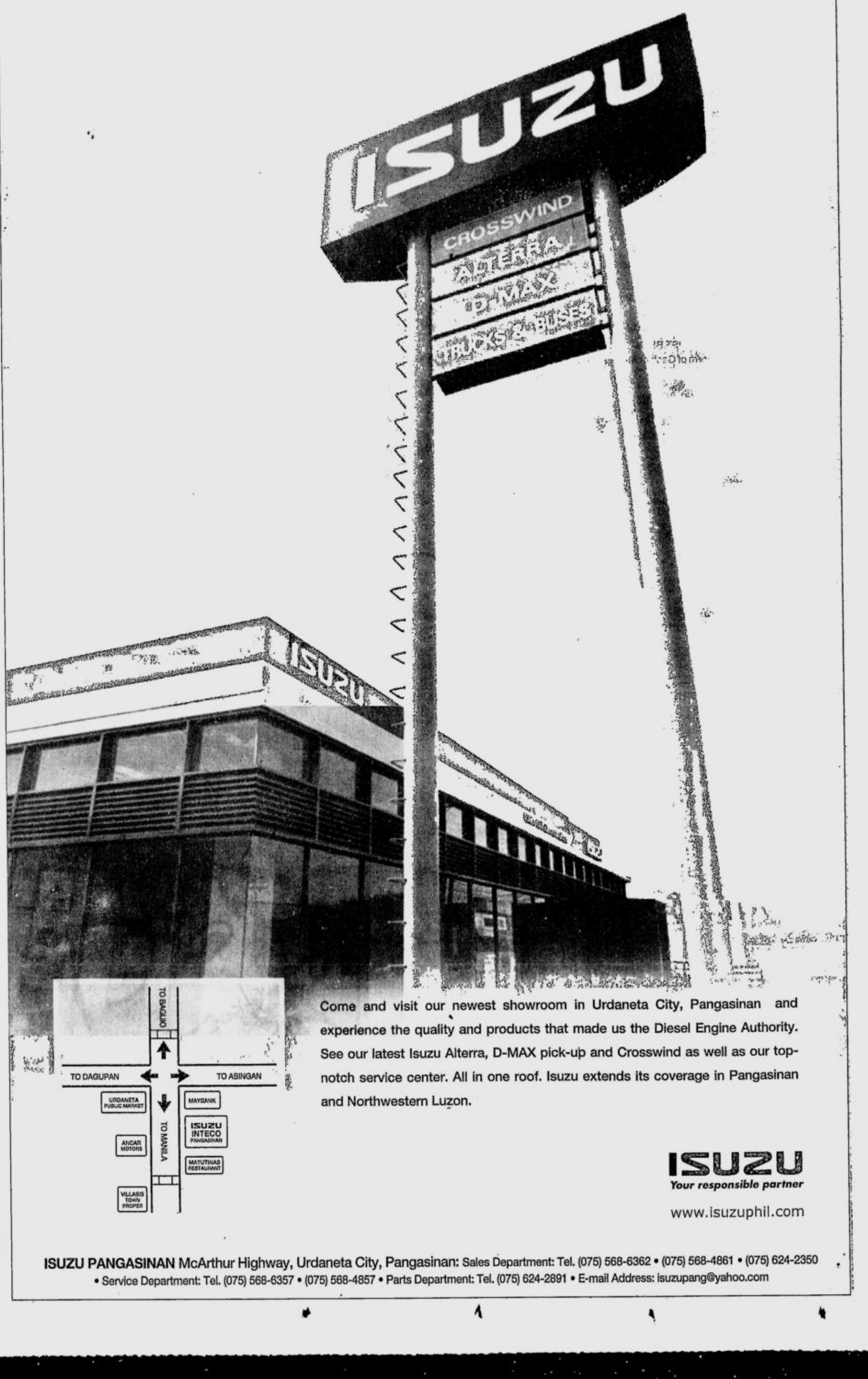

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Army says it killed top Abu leader

JOLO, SULU—AN ABU SAYYAF LEADER WAS KILLED IN A CLASH with Marines in Indanan town on Tuesday, the military yesterday reported.

Southern Command spokesperson Col. Nur Muhamad Askalani said Ismin Sahiron, son of Abu Sayyaf leader Radulan Sahiron, was killed in the Aug. 1 clash with government forces in Barangay Kagay in Indanan.

"The confirmation came from the MNLF (Moro National Liberation Front)," Askalani said.

Ismin was killed with Hardy Ajalul and a certain Pata-a, allegedly a brother-in-law, Askalani said.

Askalani was with Southcom chief Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino in Panamao town last Thursday overseeing the execution of Oplan Ultimatum, the military operation to hunt terrorists.

"We got a big fish," Dolorfino said.

But Task Force Comet chief Brig. Gen. Alexander Aleo said soldiers were still trying to locate Ismin's burial site, and only then can they confirm the report.

"No body, no evidence," Aleo said.

Gov. Benjamin Loong said it was difficult for the troops to penetrate Mt. Tumatangis in Indanan "because the place is thickly forested and there are no roads, it's difficult to reach."

Loong said the area was far from civilian population.

While the military is claiming success in the clashes, however, it drew protests for the arrest of a Muslim cleric on suspicion he had ties with the Abu Sayyaf and another terrorist group, the Abu Sofia.

Senior Insp. Samson Obatay, city police spokesperson, said the suspect, Hussain Abedin, was arrested by elements of Task Force Tugis about 7 p.m. Thursday at the terminal of Weena Buss Company along Sinsuat Avenue here.

Obatay said Abedin's companions in the Abu Sofia, who were blamed in the abduction of a Korean national treasure hunter and his Filipino hotel owner friend, were arrested last month in Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao.

"He belongs to the group and he has existing arrest warrants," Obatay said, quoting military information. *Julie Alipala and Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

CHANGING LANDSCAPE Government work crew start building steel frames for the foundation of a controversial flyover in Baguio City that even President Macapagal-Arroyo tried to stop once last year.

EV ESPIRITU, PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Man asks NBI for help in arrest of his daughter's rapist, killer

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A MAN ASKED THE National Bureau of Investigation here to help him find justice for his 11-year-old daughter who was raped, stabbed and left to die in a cave in Sitio Pinag-ubongan, Barangay Prosperidad, San Carlos City on July 23.

Geraldo Obenza, 33, a farm worker, yesterday went to the NBI here to ask that it investigate and find the assailant and rapist of his daughter, Heide, a Grade 5 pupil at the Tuburan Elementary School.

"It is painful for me to accept that the man who raped and killed my daughter is getting away. I am seeking help from the NBI because I want justice," Geraldo said.

He said his daughter failed to return home on July 23 and, after a search was conducted, only her slippers and a knife were found near a coconut tree a few meters from their house in Sitio Pinag-ubongan.

The father said it was the man he suspected of having raped and killed his daughter who suggested that they search the caves in the barangay.

He said they found her daughter's body the next day. Her clothing had been pulled above her waist and she had stab wounds in the neck and stomach, Geraldo, a widower, said.

Geraldo said the 18-year-old suspect, who is a relative of an influential man in the barangay, was rumored to have also allegedly raped a 13-year-old girl and a 12-year-old boy in the barangay but got away with the crimes after his family paid off the victims' relatives.

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Calamity declared in fire-hit areas

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE CEBU CITY COUNCIL YESterday declared four sitios of Barangay Mambaling in a state of calamity after an hour-long fire of still unknown origin destroyed hundreds of houses in the densely populated community on Aug. 1.

In a special session yesterday morning, the council declared Sitios Naba, Lawis, Puntod and Tangke II of Mambaling in a state of calamity to facilitate the release of the calamity fund needed to rebuild the houses of the victims.

Councilor Gerardo Carillo, chair of the committee on social services who authored the resolution, said the calamity fund would be used for relief operations and rehabilitation efforts.

The fire destroyed 452 houses, displacing a total of 622 families or 3,292 individuals, fire authorities said.

The fire victims are currently housed at the barangay sports complex in Mambaling.

Sanchez, Palace breakup seen in posting of new cop chief

CAMP VICENTE LIM, LAGUNA—THE APpointment of a provincial police chief in Batangas who was not the choice of the province's governor was an indication of the falling out of graces from Malacañang of Gov. Armand Sanchez, a known supporter of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Vice Gov. Ricky Recto, who has met with Ms Arroyo at least twice in the past to present to her a graft case attributed to the governor, said the appointment of Senior Supt. Edmund Zaide as Batangas police chief meant *"inilalaglag na ng Malacañang si Sanchez* (Malacañang is now dropping Sanchez like a hot potato)."

A source in the "jueteng" underworld said it also indicated that Sanchez was losing his grip on the illegal lottery in the province. The governor was mentioned in a Senate hearing as one of the biggest jueteng financiers in the country, an accusation that Sanchez repeatedly denied.

Zaide, according to sources in the Department of Interior and Local Government, is a protege of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, a native of Balayan, Batangas.

The Calabarzon police office on Thursday defended the installation of Zaide, however, as the new provincial police director of Batangas amid opposition from Sanchez.

No violation

Senior Supt. Allan Cabalquinto, the acting director of the Calabarzon police, said the PNP did not violate the local government code as claimed by Sanchez.

He said the appointment of Zaide on Monday was just temporary, replacing Senior Supt. Francisco Don Montenegro who occupied the position for almost two years.

He explained that they needed to appoint a temporary chief of the Batangas police as Montenegro was transferred to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Camp Crame.

Cabalquinto, the deputy regional director for administration of the Calabarzon police, argued that they had no hand in the appointment of Zaide.

He said the PNP's role was just ministerial in appointing Zaide.

"We were just following orders from the higher headquarters in Camp Crame," he added.

Cabalquinto explained that it was the Senior Officers Placement Board of the PNP, and not the regional police offices, that recommended the aspirants for provincial police offices.

Meeting with Puno

Sanchez, according to sources, met with Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno and questioned the appointment of Zaide. But Puno simply referred Sanchez to Ermita.

"We in the local governments give great value to the powers vested in us by law and we cannot just let this pass without posing a challenge to the same," Sanchez said in a strongly-worded letter addressed earlier to Puno.

The INQUIRER tried to get the reaction of Zaide but he refused to comment on Sanchez's statements.

Lawyer Ronaldo Geron, Batangas provincial administrator, said Sanchez had never met Zaide.

Geron said Zaide was not in the list of nominees given to them by the PNP.

Among those in the list were Senior Supt. Rizaldo Tungala Jr., Senior Supt. Cris Lacsa and a certain Senior Supt. Alvarez.

Tungala, chief of the Regional Personnel and Human Resource Development Division of the Calabarzon police, was the signatory to the appointment order of Zaide.

Geron said Sanchez wanted Senior Supt. Jose Erwin Villacorte as Montenegro's replacement.

Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SEVENTEEN villages are still flooded in Candaba, Pampanga. The deepest flood was measured at 15 feet in Barangay San Agustin. The Salandra Bridge, in photo, was destroyed. It linked the villages of Gulap and Sto. Rosario in Candaba. JOAN BONDOC

Floods in C. Luzon drain into Bulacan

CITY OF MALOLOS—FLOOD waters from Tarlac, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija have started draining into the waterways of Calumpit, Bulacan, on Friday, flooding at least seven villages there.

Calumpit Mayor James de Jesus said floods, between two and six feet deep, hit the villages of Maysulao, Sapang Bayan, Calizon, Frances, Gatbuca, Bulusan and San Miguel. These villages are near the town's rivers.

At least 200 families have been evacuated in the town, De Jesus said. But reports from the Office of Civil Defense (OCD) in Central Luzon said 640 people in Calumpit have been evacuated and are staying in five centers.

Rodolfo Santos, provincial disaster coordinating council office chief, said the floods in the town were caused by water overflowing from the Arayat River.

Hagonoy is at the mouth of the Manila Bay and is a catch basin of flood waters in Central Luzon.

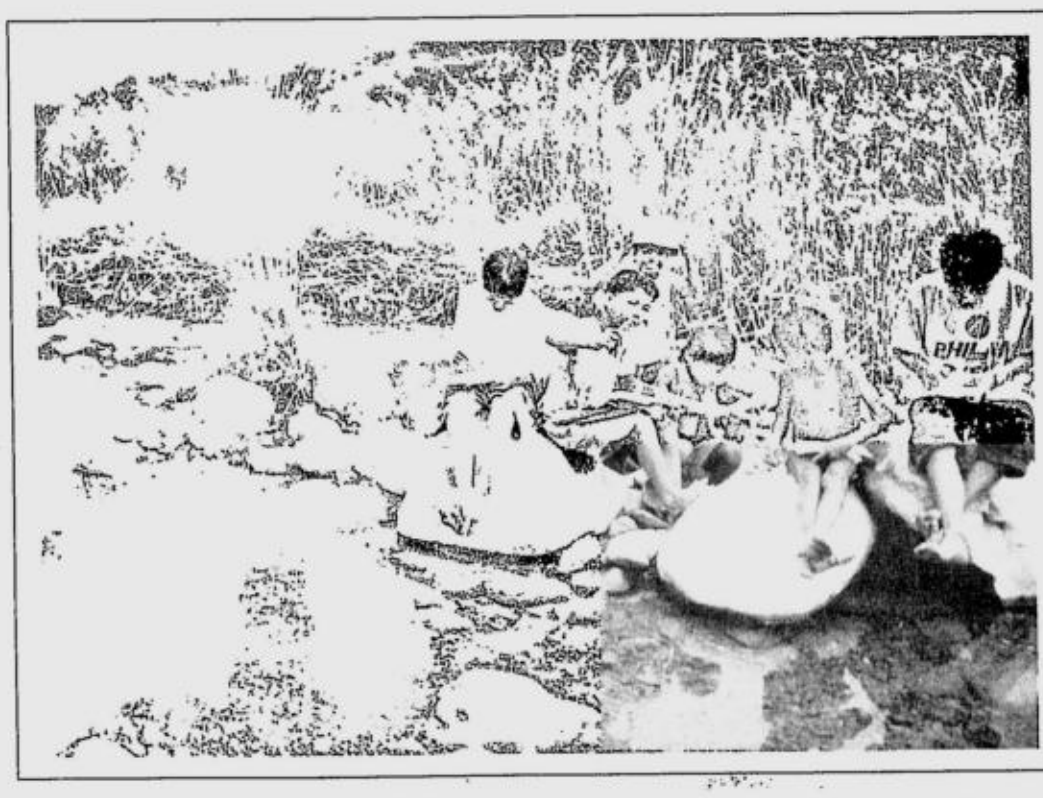
Reports from the OCD in Central Luzon said at least 13,314 people have remained in 58 evacuation centers in Tarlac, Pampanga and Bulacan.

In Tarlac, local governments have maintained 16 centers in Paniqui, four in Gerona, 11 in Ramos, three in La Paz and nine in Moncada to accommodate more than 12,000 residents.

The 10 centers in Pampanga's towns of Bacolor, Macabebe, San Luis and Sto. Tomas hosted 648 people.

Flood waters in some 200 villages in Central Luzon have subsided, down to one to two feet from eight feet in low-lying areas, the OCD said.

Neri Amparo, OCD regional director, said the Paniqui and Moncada sections of the MacArthur Highway in Tarlac, which were flooded from Tuesday to Thursday, were opened to all types of vehicles on Friday. *Carmela Reyes and Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



ROCK STUDY Mangyan pupils study on top of rocks in Sitio Balingaso, Barangay Monteclaro, San Jose, Occidental Mindoro. Their classroom is a river bed where they write on the ground with fingers or sticks. The entire community area is a natural learning space. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

UK gov't offers grants in Mindanao

THE BRITISH COUNCIL PHILIPPINES, in cooperation with UK Partners for Peace, is launching Hatag Kalinaw, a project grant competition for school and community-based youth organizations in Mindanao addressing issues on peace, development and tolerance among young people in Mindanao.

The winning proponents will receive up to P100,000 to implement their projects within six months.

The grant comes amid tensions and hostility that continue to prevail in many areas in Mindanao that make peace a very elusive dream, according to a statement from the British Council.

"Thus, it is of critical importance that the present culture of hatred, intolerance, and prejudice needs to be replaced by a new mindset based on mutual understanding and tolerance for the establishment of a culture of peace," the statement said.

"With these lies the challenge to produce extraordinary leaders that will push for a new culture and system of values that will bring peace and harmony in Mindanao."

Hatag Kalinaw is derived from two Visayan words—hatag and kalinaw. Hatag literally means to impart, give, share, grant and kalinaw, means peace.

The idea of Hatag Kalinaw sprung from the recognition by British Council Philippines of the initiatives the youth sector was contributing to peace-building efforts in Mindanao.

Often these youth organizations are bursting with ideas and enthusiasm but limited resources get in the way of them making their plans materialize.

With Hatag Kalinaw BC Philippines aims to help these youth organizations finance their projects through a project grant, that in the long run will complement the national government's peace-building work in Mindanao and other British Council work in the Philippines.

This will also further encourage the participation of young people in promoting a culture of peace as proactive citizens and peace partners.

British Council Philippines will select the top 10 entries, which will be uploaded on the British Council website for online voting.

The top five project proponents, based on points gained from online voting and scores earned in the preliminary judging, will then advance to the final phase of the competition, which is the panel presentation.

Only three projects will receive the grant of up to P100,000 to be determined after the panel presentation.

The deadline for submission of project proposals is Aug. 25, 2006. For details, and to download project proposal competition forms, visit www.britishcouncil.org.ph, or call British Council Philippines at (02) 9141011-14 local 150.

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

A. The Judicial and Bar Council announces the opening of the following COURTS:

1. Shari'a District Court, Siasi, Sulu
2. Shari'a District Court, Jolo, Sulu
3. Shari'a District Court, Bongao, Tawi-Tawi
4. Shari'a District Court, Zamboanga City
5. Shari'a District Court, Marawi City
6. Shari'a District Court, Wao-Bumbaran, Lanao Del Sur
7. Shari'a District Court, Maganoy, Maguindanao
8. Shari'a District Court, Isulan, Sultan Kudarat
9. Shari'a District Court, Lebak, Sultan Kudarat
10. Shari'a District Court, Pikit, North Cotabato
11. Shari'a Circuit Court, Jolo, Sulu
12. Shari'a Cirtcuit Court, Luuk, Sulu
13. RTC Br. 38, Manila
14. RTC Br. 81, Romblon

Applications must be submitted **NOT LATER THAN September 01, 2006**. Applicants must submit to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr. Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. No. 552-9512 Fax No. 552-9598)

Applications must submit 6 copies of each of the following:

Application Letter/Recommendation Letter with conforme of the recommendee
Personal Data Sheet (JBC Form I down-loadable from the JBC Website http://jbc.supremecourt.gov.ph)
Picture (2 x 2)
Certificate of Good Standing or latest Official Receipt from the IBP National Treasurer
ITR for 2 preceding years
Clearances from NBI, Ombudsman, Office of the Bar Confidant and employer
Transcript of Records
Police Clearance from place of residence
Certificate of Bar Rating

B. The JBC also announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (NCJR) – (*MANILA*): (Brs. 7 & 32) **AGOR**, Dominador A.; **ALFONSO**, Eduardo Jr. D.; **AMPUAN**, Alfredo D.; **ARCEGA**, Wilhelmina Melanio; **ARQUELADA**, Dominador L.; **BAUTISTA**, Jose Jr. L.; **BUEMIO**, Danilo A.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CAPELLAN**, Mario B.; **CASTILLO**, Silverio Q.; **CEDILLO**, Eranio G.; **ESTOESTA**, Ma. Theresa Gomez; **GO**, Kathrine Au; **GRAFIL**, Evangeline Yap; **ITURRALDE**, Philbert I.; **LIM**, Sarah Alma Mojica; **LIWANAG**, Rico Sebastian D.; **LORREDO**, Jorge Emmanuel M.; **LUBAO**, Antonio C.; **MACARAIG**, Virgilio V.; **MANGROBANG**, Ma. Celestina Castro Cruz; **MANTALA**, Apollo S.; **MEDINA**, Thelma Bunyi; **MONTOJO**, Peter M.; **PAGUICAN**, Pelagio S.; **PASIA**, Pio M.; **PATTUGALAN**, Nathaniel C.; **SOLIS**, Teodoro N.; **SOLUREN**, Corazon Dy; **TENORIO**, Buenaventura Albert J.; **TIMOLA**, Wilfredo V.; **TORRES**, Lizabeth Gutierrez; **TRIA**, Roslyn Rabara; **VIOLA**, Omar T. 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(REGION IV) – *LIPA CITY, BATANGAS:* *(Br. 12)* **ACAIN**, Carlos I.; **ACEDERA**, Priscilla Unating; **ALIPOSA**, Nepthali A.; **ARCEGA**, Wilhelmina Melanio; **BAGUIO**, Celso O.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CONCEPCION**, Julius M.; **DE LEON**, Maximo M.; **DELA CRUZ**, Eugenio G.; **DEYNATA**, Purita Mercado; **DUQUE**, Perla Young; **FABROS**, Lamberto C.; **FALCIS**, Rudiger II G.; **GAJARDO**, Pablo Jr. A.; **GUANLAO**, Honorio Jr. E.; **LABASTIDA**, Philip G.; **LAM**, Villamin P.; **MAGSINO**, Celso Raymundo Jr. D.; **MATIRA**, Rowena De Castro; **MAYOR**, Wilfredo J.; **PASIA**, Pio M.; **PEREÑA**, Violeta Mercado; **SANDOVAL**, Danilo S.; **SIO**, Primo Jr. G.; **TENORIO**, Buenaventura Albert J.; **VELASQUEZ**, Gregrio M., **VENTURANZA**, Alberto E.; **VILLANUEVA**, Daniel C.; **VILLANUEVA**, Romeo L.; *SAN PEDRO, LAGUNA:* *(Br. 31)* **ACAIN**, Carlos I.; **ALIPOSA**, Nepthali A.; **AMANTE**, Aleu A.; **AUMENTADO**, Reymundo L., **BAEZA**, Bienvenido Jr. V.; **BAGUIO**, Celso O.; **BAUTISTA**, Edgardo C.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CASANO**, Sonia Yu; **CHUA**, Elvira Cheng; **CONCEPCION**, Victor O.; **DE LUNA**, Ambrosio B.; **DELA CRUZ**, Ben V.; **DELA CRUZ**, Eugenio G.; **DEYNATA**, Purita Mercado; **DISTOR**, Marcial C.; **DUQUE**, Perla Young; **FAJARDO**, Alejandro Jr. D.; **FAMA**, Nadine Jessica Jaban, **GAJARDO**, Pablo Jr. A; **GLOTON**, Manuel A.; **GO**, Kathrine Au; **GUANLAO**, Honorio Jr. E.; **LABASTIDA**, Philip G.; **LATOSA**, Victoria Carina Querubin; **MACABABBAD**, Noemi Suavillo; **MAGSINO**, Celso Raymundo Jr. D.; **MATIRA**, Rowena De Castro; **OBEJAS**, Joselito D.; **PASIA**, Pio M.; **PEREÑA**, Violeta Mercado; **RAMOS**, Glenda Mendoza; **SIO**, Primo Jr. G.; **SISON**, Carolina I.; **SOLIS**, Teodoro N.; **TEJERO**, Nemesio Jr D.; **TOBIA**, Robert H.; **VELASQUEZ**, Gregorio M.; **VILLANUEVA**, Daniel C.; **VILLANUEVA**, Romeo L.; **VILLANUEVA**, Romulo S.; *BIÑAN, LAGUNA:* *(Br. 25)* **AMANTE**, Aleu A.; **AUMENTADO**, Reymundo L.; **BALDERAMA**, Angelio I.; **BAUTISTA**, Edgardo C.; **CALIS**, Elpidio R.; **CASANO**, Sonia Yu; **CONCEPCION**, Victor O.; **COSUCO**, Arturo V.; **DELA CRUZ**, Ben V.; **DELA CRUZ**, Eugenio G.; **DISTOR**, Marcial C.; **DUQUE**, Perla Young; **ELEAZAR**, Victor Y.; **FABROS**, Lamberto C.; **FALCIS**, Rudiger II G.; **FORTUNO**, Jose C.; **GO**, Kathrine Au; **HERNANDEZ**, Ireneo D.; **LATOSA**, Victoria Carina Querubin; **MATURAN**, Arturo Juanito T.; **OBINARIO**, Tita Sta. Monica; **PEREÑA**, Violeta Mercado; **PICHAY**, Ramsey Domingo G.; **PINTAC**, Edmundo P.; **RUBIA**, Marino E.; **SOLIS**, Teodoro N.; **SUBIDO**, Benjamin T.; **TEJERO**, Nemesio Jr. D.; **URBI**, Emil G.; **VELASQUEZ**, Gregorio M., **VILLALON**, Roman IV C.; **VILLANUEVA**, Romeo L.; **VILLANUEVA**, Romulo S., **VILLEGAS**, Mary Antonette Yalao *MAMBURAO, MINDORO OCCIDENTAL:* *(Br. 44)* **ACAIN**, Carlos I., **BARAQUEL**, Manuel S.; **BRIZUELA**, Wilfredo L.; **DELGADO**, Ulysses D.; **MARISTELA**, Domingo Jr. B.; **VENTURANZA**, Alberto E. (Region VI) – *CULASI, ANTIQUE:* *(Br. 13)* **CALMORIN**, Luzermindo A.; **CASALAN**, Romeo B.; **GELLA**, Victor C. (Region VIII) – *CARIGARA, LEYTE* *(Br. 36)*: **BUÑALES**, Virgilio A.; **CAMPOMANES**, Marilyn Ronquillo; **CASTILLO**, Lauro Andres P.; **DUQUILLA**, Zacarias E.; **HUÑAMAYOR**, Cristiana Sia; **IRIARTE**, Rafael M.; **LABASTIDA**, Philip G.; **RENDORA**, Estelita Gonzaga; **SABARRE**, Edgar A.; **TANDINCO**, Filemon Jr. A. (REGION X) – *SURIGAO CITY, SURIGAO DEL NORTE:* *(Br. 29)* **CANOY**, Victor A.; **LITERATTO**, Rolando T.; **MANTILLA**, Fionelio O.; **MOLETA**, Ignacio P.; **MOMONGAN**, Jorge M.; **OMANDAM**, Roberto C.; **VALMORIDA**, Jo-Jac-Atom B. (REGION XI) – *DAVAO CITY, DAVAO DEL SUR:* *(Br. 12)* **ALCONERA**, Virgilio P.; **ALONZO**, Rudy C.; **ARBILON**, Demosthenes R.; **ARIAS**, Alfredo Sr. B.; **BERSALES**, Jose A.; **BORDALBA**, Cesar P.; **BUSRAN**, Lacsaman M.; **CABREROS**, Socorro E.; **CASTILLO**, Jose Emmanuel M.; **DE LA BANDA**, Gil A.; **ESCOVILLA**, Antonina Bartolome; **FERRARIS**, Rufino Jr. S.; **FULGAR**, Jose Jerry L.; **GARCIA**, Jerry A.; **LOPEZ**, Francisco Jr. H.; **MASORONG**, Edgar A.; **OMELIO**, George E.; **PAGUICAN**, Pelagio S.; **SEPULVEDA**, Victor C.; **SUELO**, Herminio V.; **TANJILI**, Ridgway M.; **XENOS**, Dax G

METROPOLITAN TRIAL COURT (METC): (NCJR) – *QUEZON CITY:* (*Brs. 35, 38 & 41)* **ECHIVERRI**, Madonna C.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC): (REGION III) – *ANGELES CITY, PAMPANGA:* *(Br. 3)* **LOGRONIO**, Gemma Theresa Hilario (REGION IV) – *CALAMBA CITY, LAGUNA*: **ACOL**, Rodolfo Joji Jr. A.; **ALONZO**, Fernando M.; **BEDAÑA**, Gina Amatong; **BUENAVENTURA**, Romeo S.; **DE LUNA**, Josielyn Lara; **FLORES**, Jose Ricuerdo P.; **GALACGAC**, Marvin A.; **GENILO**, Raymund R.; **GO**, Kathrine Au; **LEGASPI**, Emilio Rodolfo III Y.. **LLAMAS**, Juan Victor R.; **RAMOS**, Glenda Mendoza; **SISON**, Carolina Icasiano (REGION VIII) – *MAASIN CITY, SOUTHERN LEYTE:* **CUATON**, Wenifredo C.; **LEONIDO**, Edgardo C.; **ROJAS**, Teopisto Jr. C

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION I) – *URDANETA, PANGASINAN:* **CABREROS**, Harriet Cawi; **CALDONA**, Mary George C.; **FERNANDEZ**, Rebecca Andrada; **MABALOT**, Roberto R.; **PANAHON**, Irma Buenaventura *MANGALDAN, PANGASINAN:* **ASUNCION**, Damaso Jr. P.; **FERNANDEZ**, Rebecca Andrada; **MABALOT**, Roberto R.; **MARATA**, Gonzalo P.; **PARAYNO**, Ferdinand D.; **PARAYNO**, Maria Laarni Ramos; **TANO**, Ma. Theresa Guadaña (REGION III) – *PEÑARANDA, NUEVA ECIJA:* **GUERRERO**, Fernando Jr. Y.; **PANGILINAN**, Mario M.; **RAMOS**, Nathanael A. (REGION IV) – *CUENCA, BATANGAS:* **ACEDERA**, Priscilla Unating; **BAYLON**, Ferdinand C.; **CARANDANG**, Jose Alexander R.; **CHAVEZ**, Librado P.; **EXCHAURE**, Nilo P.; (REGION VI) – *BINALBAGAN, NEGROS OCCIDENTAL:* **ARSENIO**, Evelyn Delgado; **TABAT**, Danilo P.; **TROCIO**, Dyna Doll Chiongson (REGION X) – *LOPEZ JAENA, MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL:* **ADLAWAN**, Armando S.; **LARIBA**, Grace Monica Zapatos; **MONTEJO**, Nora Batoy (REGION XI) – *SAN ISIDRO, DAVAO ORIENTAL:* **ARANCON**, Fredescundo G.; **BALOY**, Clemente E.; **ENRIQUEZ**, R. Alejandro L.; **VILLEGAS**, Jesse S.; *LAAK, COMPOSTELA VALLEY:* **ENRIQUEZ**, R. Alejandro L.; **MADRAZO**, Leo T.; **VEGA**, Teodulfo L. *TAMPACAN, SOUTH COTABATO:* **CORDERO**, Francisco Jr. J.; **PALMES**, Joseph A.; **TAMPAC**, Renato V. (REGION XII) – *KAPATAGAN, LANAO DEL NORTE:* **MACUMBAL**, Arassad M.; **QUINTO**, Alberto P.; **RUELO**, Earl Charito J

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION I) – *SAN JUAN-SAN GABRIEL, LA UNION:* **ASUNCION**, Damaso Jr. P.; **CABREROS**, Harriet Cawi; **HUMIDING**, Jennifer Palaguitang; **ORDONO**, Alan M.; **PARAYNO**, Maria Laarni Ramos; **TALOMA**, Venus Maglaya (REGION II) – *IVANA-UYUGAN, BATANES:* **GAÑAC**, Norman C.; **MATA**, Oscar D.; **QUILANG**, Domingo III B. (REGION III) – *SAN MARCELINO-CASTILLEJOS, ZAMBALES:* **BAUTISTA**, Josephine Gonzales; **BEDAÑA**, Gina Amatong; **RECITIS**, Ildefonso F. (REGION IV) – *TALISAY-LAUREL, BATANGAS:* **ANDAL**, Marie Lynn Laborte; **ARELLANO**, Ralph S.; **AZARES**, Benthom Paul C.; **BRIZUELA**, Wilfredo L.; **CHAVEZ**, Librado P.; **PEREZ**, Edwina Macalintal; **SARMIENTO**, Sheila Angela Palo (REGION V) – *CATAINGAN-PIO V. CORPUZ-ESPERANZA, MASBATE:* **CASTILLO**, Eva Almario; **CONAG**, Dioscoro V.; **LOGARTA**, Mary Flor Tabigue; **SANCHEZ**, Diana Tambago; **VASQUEZ**, Ricar N. (REGION VIII) – *SAN JULIAT-SULAT, EASTERN SAMAR:* **ALCONABA**, Reynaldo A.; **ECHAGUE**, Renato Noel Capones; **REAGO**, Lorenzo A. (REGION X) – *BONIFACIO-DON MARIANO MARCOS, MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL:* **ADLAWAN**, Armando S.; **LAUREL**, Ernesto Maximo E.; **MURALLON**, Roy P.; **TAN**, Rico A. *TUBOD-ALEGRIA, SURIGAO DEL NORTE:* **ALVARADO**, Adelyn Pongcol; **BENANING**, Ombra B.; **CORO**, Manuel G. *KAPALONG-TALAINGOD, DAVAO DEL NORTE:* **BOLOY**, Clemente E.; **MACASA**, Conrado O.; **VEGA**, Teodulfo L.; **VIVA**, Maria Iluminada Lapid (REGION XI) – *MALALAG-SULOP, DAVAO DEL SUR:* **ARANCON**, Fredescundo G.; **BOLOY**, Clemente E.; **DALUMPINES**, Suzette Gallemaso *SURRALAH-LAKE SECU, SOUTH COTABATO:* **DONDIEGO**, Veronica Abuniawan; **PILLA**, Nelson B.; **TAMPAC**, Renato V. *MARIHATAG-SAN MIGUEL, SURIGAO DEL SUR:* **BARRIOS**, Ricardo Jr. G.; **DE CASTRO**, Domingo P.; **JOVEN**, Zacharias P. (REGION XII) – *BALINDONG-TUGAYA-BACOLOD-GRANDE-MADALUM, LANAO DEL SUR:* **ALAWI**, Saipal M.; **EDRES**, Anuar A.; **PANGCATAN**, Hasmin I. *MAIGO-BACOLOD-MUNAI, LANAO DEL NORTE: MACUMBAL*, Arassad M.; **QUINTO**, Alberto P.; **RUELO**, Earl Charito J.

The public may submit any sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants **not later than AUGUST 11, 2006** to the JBC Secretariat.

All applicants to all JBC positions must submit to the JBC Secretariat ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1, current cellphone and landline numbers, current residence and e-mail address.

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(PDI – August 5, 2006)

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WHAT'S INSIDE

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Two cops nabbed for cameraman's slay

Caloocan officers suspected members of robbery syndicate

By Nancy C. Carvajal and Luige A. del Puerto

TWO POLICE OFFICERS AND A CIVILIAN were charged with robbery with homicide and frustrated murder for the death of RPN 9 cameraman Ralph Ruñez.

Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil identified the policemen as Insp. Bryan Limbo, chief of Sub-station 3, and PO3 Aristotle de Guzman of PCP 5 in Bagong Silang, Caloocan City.

Also charged was Hernani Magnayon, 29, of 438 Uyguanco St., Barrio Sto. Nino, Tala, Caloocan City who was positively identified by at least four witnesses as one of two persons who allegedly robbed and killed Ruñez on July 28.

The police officers were allegedly involved in a criminal syndicate that was behind several murder and robbery cases.

Bataoil said the police officers were implicated by Charles Galarce, a former member of the group.

The two were allegedly present when the attack on the cameraman was being planned.

Galarce, the NPD chief said, came forward after Magnayon and a companion supposedly left him for dead on July 26 near the house of the cameraman at Admin Site, in Tala, Caloocan North.

Galarce is under police protection at the East Avenue Medical Center.

He was reportedly shot for refusing to participate in robbing Ruñez.

With the arrest of the suspects in Ruñez's killing, police chief Director General Oscar Calderon said they had solved the first case within President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-week timetable for resolving cases involving journalists and members of party-list organizations.

Calderon assured Ruñez's family that the charges against Limbo and De Guzman would be pursued.

He said the arrest of the policemen showed the authorities' desire to solve the killings, regardless of who were involved.

SUSPECTS in the killing of television cameraman Ralph Ruñez (from left): Nani Magnayon, the alleged gunman; P/Insp. Bryan Limbo and PO3 Aristotle de Guzman.
JOAN BONDOC

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'Maximo' is movie critics' choice as best film for 2005

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE DIGITAL FILM "ANG PAGDADALAGA NI Maximo Oliveros," the first full length feature movie directed by Aureaus Solito was named Best Picture Thursday evening by the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino.

The award is the latest in a long list of honors the film has received here and abroad.

"Maximo," the tragicomic story of a 12-year-old gay boy who falls in love with an honest cop trying to bring to justice the boy's father and brothers, got three other awards during the 29th Gawad Urian at the Ateneo de Manila in Quezon City.

This year's ceremonies bestowed the Natatanging Gawad Urian award to actor/director Eddie Garcia for decades of contribution to the movie industry.

Clarence Sison and Kanakan Balintag received the Best Editing award, while writer Michiko Yamamoto received the Best Screenplay trophy. The Best Cinematography award went to Chuck Ali and Joanna Roxas, also for "Maximo."

The Best Director award, however, went to Mes de Guzman, who megged "Ang Daan Patungong Kalimugtong," a poignant story of two Kankana-ey children in Benguet who climb mountains and cross rivers to go to school everyday.

De Guzman, together with Noel Montano, also received the Urian award for Best Production Design for "Kalimugtong" by Sampaybakod Productions.

Robin Padilla was named Best Actor for his work in Mark Meiley's "La Visa Loca" as a street-smart limousine driver wanting to work as a caregiver in the United States.

Jaclyn Jose was Best Actress for her work in Emmanuel dela Cruz's coming-of-age film, "Sarung Banggi (One Night)".

Veteran actress Hilda Koronel was named Best Supporting Actress for her role as one of two spinster sisters in the suspense-drama "Nasaan Ka Man" by Cholo Laurel.

Ketchup Eusebio topped the Best Supporting Actor race for his work in "Sa Aking Pagkagising Mula Sa Kamulatan" by Ato M. Bautista.

The Best Sound award went to Raffy Magsaysay for "Big Time" by Mario Cornejo and Monster Jimenez.

Vincent de Jesus's work in Unitel Pictures' "La Visa Loca" earned him the Best Music trophy.

"Maximo," which debuted at last year's first Cinemalaya Philippine Independent Film Festival organized by the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the University of the Philippines, earlier got the Jury Prize for Best Picture and Best Production Design award at Cinemanila, Golden Zenith Award for Best Picture at the Montreal World Film Festival 2005, Best Picture award at the ImagineNative Film Festival 2005 in Toronto, and Best Picture prize at the Asian Festival of First Films 2005 in Singapore, among others.

WINNERS at the 29th Urian Awards show off their trophies (from left): Ketchup Eusebio, best supporting actor; Robin Padilla, best actor; Eddie Garcia, Natatanging Gawad Urian awardee; Jaclyn Jose, best actress, and Hilda Koronel, best supporting actress. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Manila plans to set up milk bank

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE CITY OF MANILA IS STUDYING the possibility of setting up a milk bank to collect breast milk for babies whose mothers have to work.

Cely Sangil, assistant head of the Manila Department of Social Welfare, said the local government was thinking of setting up a milk bank at the Ospital ng Maynila.

"The milk bank will function like a blood bank: lactating mothers could donate extra milk to the facility for use by women unable to provide breast milk to their own babies," Sangil said in an interview.

"The city government is strongly supporting breastfeeding as a primary bonding activity between mother and child," Sangil said.

Experts recommend feeding an infant breast milk exclusively during the first six months of a baby's life. Breast milk can then be complemented with other food from six months until the child is about 2 years old.

Sangil said City Hall was encouraging women employees to give their babies breast milk. The employees could collect their milk and store it in the refrigerator of city hall clinic to be picked up before they go home, Sangil said.

In a related development, Pampanga Rep. Anna York Bondoc said a bill, the Working Mothers Breastfeeding Act, would be filed in Congress within the year to give recognition to companies that support breastfeeding.

She said that under the bill, companies providing lactation rooms, where nursing women could collect their milk during breaks, would get tax incentives. "The incentives would encourage companies and institutions to support breastfeeding, which is a must for mother and baby," Bondoc said.

Because breastfeeding was healthier for babies, absenteeism among female employees could be reduced as many childhood ailments could be prevented.

"Breast milk contains antiviral and antibacterial components that would make babies less prone to sickness," the Pampanga representative said.

She added that another bill, the Family Support for Breastfeeding Act, would require couples to undergo breastfeeding counseling seminars before getting married.

METROBRIEFS

No bail for slay suspect

NO BAIL was recommended for the alleged gunman in the killing of photojournalist Dick Melendres who was shot dead in Malabon City on Monday. The victim's older brother, Elpidio, said Roberto Caban Lopez, 36, of Phase 3 Blk. 39, Salaysalay St. Caloocan City was facing a murder charge in the office of Prosecutor Ojer Pacis. According to police documents shown to the INQUIRER by Elpidio, Lopez was arrested yesterday along Tupda Lower Block 5, Barangay 8, Caloocan City at around 8:40 a.m. Lopez was positively identified by a witness who saw him shoot the victim in the chest with a .38 cal. pistol, the report said. The elder Melendres said the suspect admitted he is the cousin of Antonio Lopez, a neighbor of the victim who was one of two persons mentioned in a sealed letter he left behind and which he wanted opened in case of his death. "I am deeply grateful to Senior Supt. Moises Guevarra and his men who worked hard to solve the case," said Ma. Liberty, the victim's wife who was present during the inquest proceedings.

Nancy C. Carvajal

11 kids rescued in raid

FOR TWO years, his family stayed inside the preacher's house, believing his promise of salvation. But rage had replaced faith in Jessie Carbonell's heart. Responding to Carbonell's complaint that his 15-year-old daughter was allegedly raped by alleged cult leader Antonio Faelnar and with his two sons still kept inside the suspect's house, police yesterday arrested Faelnar after a tense three-hour raid, Marikina City Police chief Supt. Sotero Ramos told the INQUIRER. The police finally recovered Carbonell's two sons John and Michael yesterday, Ramos added. The city social welfare and development office also took custody of at least 11 children police found inside Faelnar's house on Eastdrive Street in Barangay Marikina Heights. Faelnar denied the allegations and said he was just "preaching the works of the Lord."

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Reading program launched

"SHARE your change and help kids read" is the challenge posed to motorists who use the South Luzon Expressway (SLEx) by McDonald's Charities in cooperation with the Philippine National Construction Company Skyway Corp. and the PNCC South Luzon Tollway. The fund-raising project, launched last July 12, is for the benefit of Bright Minds Read, McDonald's Charities' beginning reading program for Grade 1 public school students and the Philippine National Red Cross. Donation boxes have been installed at all toll gate exits at the SLEx for prospective donors.

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Former congressman injured in road accident

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FORMER PANGASINAN REPRESentative and vice governor Ranjit Shahani, a nephew of former President Fidel Ramos, suffered multiple injuries when his car collided with a delivery van about 9 p.m. Thursday in Makati City.

Shahani was rushed to the hospital after the black Mitsubishi Lancer (WTG-321) car he was driving crashed into a delivery van (UJC-283) on the opposite lane of Metropolitan Avenue in Barangay Bel-Air.

The incident also injured the van's driver, Victoriano Mongcal of Pasig, 50, and his two passengers, Richard Roquia, 34, of Marikina City, and Jose Silab, 52, of Taguig City.

An incident report signed by Makati Traffic Enforcement Unit (MTEU) chief, Senior Insp. Estela Lomat, showed that Shahani, 44, son of former Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, was traveling westbound when the car hit a gutter on the right side.

SHAHANI

The impact knocked the car off course, sending it to the opposite lane into the path of the delivery van.

The injured were brought to the Acute Care Center of Ospital ng Makati. Shahani, who suffered minor injuries, was transferred later to a private hospital. Lomat said the van's driver and his passengers had already been released from the hospital.

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My former boss at dwIZ, former-Ambassador Antonio Cabangon-Chua, has allowed my staff and I to use the offices to receive guests.

My staff and I consider helping the oppressed and the needy our mission in life. You will be told about our new radio station or TV channel through this column.

* * *

A restaurant waiter whom the "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" program helped in filing administrative and criminal charges against a policeman for beating him up two years ago was killed by another cop several nights ago.

The two incidents—his being beaten up by a cop two years ago and his being killed by another cop—were not related.

Rommel Duran, 32, complained to us in 2004 after he was beaten up by a drunken cop at a Chinese restaurant on Baywalk on Roxas Boulevard, Manila. He was serving the cop, PO1 Michael Robles of the Quezon City police station, when the drunken officer beat him up for no apparent reason.

So Robles would not be able to harass him, I sought employment for Duran as waiter of a restaurant in Pasig.

On Aug. 1, Duran was in Parañaque with two friends waiting for a ride when PO1 Joseph Flores, on a motorcycle, sideswiped one of his two friends.

There was an altercation between Duran and his two friends, on the one hand, and the cop on the other. The heated argument lead to a fistfight. Flores drew his gun and fired at the three friends. Duran was killed on the spot while one of his two friends died at a hospital. The third friend was seriously injured.

After that incident on Baywalk two years ago, Duran told me he was scared of cops. He never knew he would die at the hands of a cop.

* * *

Every day, from Monday to Friday, scores of people come to dwIZ to seek the help of "Isumbong" in obtaining justice for wrongdoing committed by those in power.

About seven of 10 visitors complain against abusive policemen.

"Isumbong" has been responsible for the dismissal, demotion, suspension or reprimand of countless law enforcers who have oppressed civilians. If we don't get another TV channel and radio station for our program soon, who will lend a helping hand to the oppressed?

* * *

I will be gone for a while. The "heat" is too much to bear in Metro Manila. Don't worry, I'll try not to be like Duran who was unarmed. I have the means to fight back.

Iraq sliding into civil war, US general warns

WASHINGTON—THE COMMANDER of US forces in the Middle East bluntly warned a Senate committee on Thursday that sectarian violence in Iraq, especially in Baghdad, had grown so severe that the nation could slide toward civil war.

The commander, Gen. John P. Abizaid, also acknowledged that since the security situation remained so unstable, significant reductions in US forces were unlikely before the end of this year.

Asked by Sen. Carl Levin of Michigan, the ranking Democrat on the Senate Armed Services Committee, whether Iraq risked falling into civil war, Abizaid replied, "I believe that the sectarian violence is probably as bad as I've seen it, in Baghdad in particular, and that if not stopped, it is possible that Iraq could move towards civil war." But, he later added, he did not think civil war was probable.

In March, Abizaid told the Senate Appropriations Committee that sectarian violence in Iraq was replacing the insurgency as the greatest threat to security and stability. But the tone of the testimony at the Senate panel's hearing on Thursday was grimmer than the Pentagon's previous assessments, which have sought to accentuate the positive even as officials acknowledged that Iraq's government was struggling to assert authority and assure security amid violence.

The security situation in Iraq was described in even starker terms by a senior British diplomat in Baghdad, who contradicted the official stance in London and Washington by concluding that Iraq is closer to civil war and partition than to democracy. In a confidential telegram seen by a BBC correspondent in the Iraqi capital, the diplomat, William Patey, who finished his tour in Baghdad last week, told Prime Minister Tony Blair that "the prospect of a low-intensity civil war and a de facto division of Iraq is probably more likely at this stage than a successful and substantial transition to a stable democracy."

At the Senate hearing, Gen. Peter Pace, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, added his voice to Abizaid's grim assessment of the sectarian violence in an exchange with Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz. The generals' comments on Thursday came in a sometimes-contentious hearing that drew unusual attention after Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld at first declined to testify, but, under criticism from committee Democrats, decided to attend.

Rumsfeld listened to Abizaid and Pace, took notes, and did not contradict his generals' assessments of the deteriorating security situation in Iraq. But he stressed that the war must not be lost. *New York Times*

AN IRAQI man is comforted as he mourns the death of his two sons killed at a soccer field. Two roadside bombs killed 12 people, mostly young soccer players, in the Baghdad district of Amel Aug. 3. REUTERS

Suicide bomber kills 21 Afghans, 4 Nato soldiers

KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN—A SUICIDE car bomber Thursday killed 21 civilians in one of Afghanistan's deadliest attacks this year, while four Nato soldiers and 10 Taliban rebels died in other violence.

The interior ministry said a car bomber drove his vehicle into a crowded bazaar in southern Kandahar province, the birthplace of the Taliban who have been blamed for numerous suicide attacks since their fall from power in 2001.

"Twenty-one civilians, including children, were killed and 13 others were injured," ministry spokesperson Yousuf Stanizai told AFP.

Nato said one of its convoys was a few hundred meters away when the bomb exploded in Panjwayi district but it was not affected and it was unclear if it was the intended target.

The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) convoy had been passing through to recover vehicles involved in two earlier roadside bombings that killed a Canadian soldier and wounded four others, spokesperson Major Quentin Innes said.

"It was a suicide attack carried out by terrorists," Kandahar government spokesperson Daud Ahmadi said. "Its target is not known as there were not any government or Nato present when it took place." Panjwayi, a known Taliban stronghold, is about 30 kilometers west of Kandahar city.

The bomb blasts were about 10 kilometers further west, in the Pashmul area where a Taliban ambush later killed three more Nato troops and wounded six others.

The first bomb hit a patrol securing a major east-to-west highway at about 4:20 a.m., ISAF said. A Canadian soldier was killed and another wounded.

The second blast hit the same area around 7:15 a.m. and wounded three more Canadian troops. None suffered life-threatening injuries.

Then around 12:30 p.m. another ISAF patrol was ambushed by insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades. Three soldiers were killed and six wounded, ISAF said, without immediately releasing their nationalities.

The latest deaths bring to seven the number of ISAF troops killed in southern Afghanistan since the force on Monday took over command of the area from a US-led coalition that unseated the Taliban in late 2001.

Three British soldiers were killed on Tuesday in neighboring Helmand province when rebels attacked their convoy.

The Nato force in the south comprises nearly 8,000 ISAF troops—including British, Canadian, Dutch and US soldiers.

Kandahar, where the Canadian troops are based, is a hotspot for suicide bombings. In the biggest this year, 22 civilians were killed when an attacker blew himself up among a crowd of men leaving a wrestling match in the border town of Spin Boldak in January.

Panjwayi, near where the fugitive leader of the Taliban Mullah Mohammad Omar once lived, has also been the target of major coalition strikes this year that have killed scores of rebels.

Afghan and international security forces are pursuing rebels in the south to establish government authority over the lawless area where Taliban fighters are said to have teamed up with drugs runners.

Ten rebels were killed late Wednesday when Nato warplanes helped Afghan security forces raid Taliban hideouts in Helmand's Garmser district, police said.

Two policemen were wounded, local police chief Mohammad Rasoul Aka said. Provincial police chief Mohammad Nabi Mullahkhil said 22 Taliban were killed or wounded. *AFP*

PHOTO taken in 1958 during the guerrilla war led by Fidel Castro (top, second right) against Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista. At bottom Raul Castro is seen next to Argentinian born Ernesto Che Guevara (top, second left) and other members of the guerrilla movement. AFP

Castro illness sets stage for collective leadership

HAVANA—FROM HIS SICKBED, Fidel Castro has set the stage for a more collective style of governance in a country long used to a single strongman, selecting six trusted comrades to run key projects while his younger brother Raul acts as president and head of the Communist Party.

The division of powers gives the first solid indication of the direction the Cuban government is likely to take after Castro's death.

In a statement announcing his illness Monday night, Castro said longtime Defense Minister Raul Castro was in charge of the government, the ruling party and the military during a recovery expected to take weeks.

But Castro distributed responsibility for running and funding his pet projects among six men, including Vice President Carlos Lage, Foreign Minister Felipe Perez Roque and Central Bank President Francisco Soberon.

He also named the Communist Party as the guiding force for ensuring his instructions were followed.

"There is no doubt that our people and our Revolution will fight to the last drop of blood to defend these and other ideas and measures that are necessary to safeguard this historic process," Castro wrote.

Raul Castro recently hinted at a shared future style of governance, noting that his older brother was a singular type of leader and saying the party—not any individual—would be Castro's true successor.

The elder Castro, 79, is famous for wanting to have a say in virtually every area of the island's governance.

The party newspaper Granma underscored that point Thursday, saying that "the special confidence the people grant the founding leader of a revolution cannot be transmitted as if were an inheritance to those who will occupy the top positions in the country in the future."

Next to his brother, Castro gave the heaviest responsibilities to Lage, charging him with overseeing his ongoing "energy revolution"—a massive renovation of the island's antiquated electrical grid.

A generation younger than Castro at 54, Lage is credited with helping save Cuba's faltering economy after the Soviet Union broke up, designing modest economic reforms that allowed foreign investment in state enterprises and legalized the use of the US dollar. Those reforms have been rolled back as the economy improves.

Trained as a pediatrician, Lage is a mild-mannered man with a balding pate and pleasant face often sent to represent Cuba at international gatherings. He has wide control over government administration and holds key positions in the Council of State and Politburo.

Representing an even younger generation is 41-year-old Perez Roque, just 34 when appointed foreign minister in 1999. Perez Roque previously spent seven years overseeing Castro's personal schedule, becoming intimately familiar with the leader's thinking.

A short, stocky man with a ready grin, Perez Roque kept a cool head and grabbed the microphone to calm tens of thousands of Cubans in 2001 when Castro fainted briefly during a speech.

Soberon, the 62-year-old central bank president, evidently was named in Castro's statement for his role in financing projects.

Castro also handed some duties to three old-time Communist leaders relatively unknown outside Cuba: Health Minister Jose Ramon Balaguer and Vice President Jose Ramon Machado Ventura—representing the revolution's oldest surviving leaders—and Vice President Esteban Lazo Hernandez, Cuba's most powerful black leader.

Their inclusion shows Castro wants to ensure the leadership does not stray from communist principles in his absence. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Thousands flee Sri Lanka fighting

TRINCOMALEE—Thousands of civilians fled Sri Lanka's eastern battle zone on foot on Friday as shells fell nearby, the Red Cross said. The rebels and army dueled with artillery and mortar fire, and small pockets of rebels continued fire fights with troops in the eastern Muslim town of Mutur, where aid workers say around 22,000 people have been trapped by the fighting. Tamil Tigers attacked also army camps and Norway's peace envoy flew in to try to halt a slide back to civil war. At least 20 civilians, 12 Tigers and one soldier were killed on Thursday. The military says it has killed more than 70 rebels in the past week and the Tigers say they have the bodies of 40 troops ready to hand over. But each side dismisses the other's claims. *Reuters*

HIV-positive Cambodian rapes wife, gets 10 years

PHNOM PENH—A Cambodian court has jailed an HIV-positive man for 10 years for raping his wife without using a condom, the first conviction under landmark AIDS laws introduced in 2003, court officials said on Friday. Meas My, a 40-year-old sailor, was arrested in January last year after his wife complained to police about his refusal to use a condom during sex, even though he had been confirmed as having HIV, the virus that causes AIDS. When his wife refused to have sex with him, he beat her and then raped her, prosecutors said. "Her husband did not respect her love toward him. We cannot tolerate his acts," said prosecutor Ngeth Sarath, commenting on the ruling handed down late on Thursday. He did not reveal whether the wife had contracted HIV. At least 70,000 Cambodian children have been orphaned by AIDS, according to the National AIDS Authority. *Reuters*

Bill on wages dies in US Senate

WASHINGTON—Senate Democrats on Thursday blocked legislation tying the first minimum wage increase in almost a decade to a decrease in the federal estate tax, denying Republicans a legislative victory as lawmakers head into a crucial month of campaigning before the November elections. Republican backers of the measure, dubbed the trifecta for its three chief elements, fell four votes short of the 60 needed to cut off debate. Democrats had argued that it was a bad bargain to exchange a $2.10 wage increase for struggling workers for a costly tax cut for the country's wealthiest families. "This trifecta is a high-stakes gamble with America's future," said Sen. Richard J. Durbin of Illinois, the Senate's No.2 Democrat. "This is the worst special-interest bill I have seen in my time in Congress." The failure of the bill was a significant defeat for Sen. Bill Frist, the majority leader entering his last months in the post. Frist had hoped to steer the measure through the Senate, partly with the help of an accompanying series of tax incentives and federal aid to woo lawmakers. But Frist and his allies in business, who viewed the wage increase—stretched over three years—as an acceptable trade-off for a permanent reduction in the estate tax and the other tax breaks, could not overcome intense opposition from Democrats and organized labor. *New York Times*

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
PASIG RIVER REHABILITATION COMMISSION
2/F Engineering Building, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. +632 9265233; +632 4333446
Telefax Nos. +632 9265234; +632 4333444

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Republic of the Philippines

Supply and Installation of Ticketing and Access System for the Pasig River Ferry Stations

The PRRC, through the General Appropriations Act of 2006 intends to apply the sum of **Eighteen Million Nine Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Two Hundred And 00/100 Pesos (Php 18,925,200.00)** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for **Supply and Installation of Ticketing and Access System for the Pasig River Ferry Stations (PRFS-TS-01).** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The PRRC now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for **Supply and Installation of Ticketing and Access System for the Pasig River Ferry Stations (PRFS-TS-01).** Delivery of the GOODS is required starting **October 12, 2006**. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138) Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from **9:00A.M. to 3:00P.M.**

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F MWSS Compound, Engineering Building
Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from **August 7 to August 18, 2006, 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.** at the address below upon submission of Letter of Intent and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of **TWELVE THOUSAND PESOS (Php 12,000.00)**. The method of payment shall be made only upon a certification by the Head of the Procuring Entity to the effect that the Goods have been rendered or delivered in accordance with the terms of the Contract and have been duly inspected and accepted. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The PRRC-IABAC will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on **August 24, 2006, 10:00 A.M.** at the Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission, PRRC Conference Room, 2F MWSS Engineering Building, Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before **September 5, 2006, 10:00 AM**. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form and amount stated in the Bid Data Sheet or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on **September 5, 2006, 10:30 AM** at the **PRRC Conference Room**. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The PRRC-IABAC reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F MWSS Compound, Engineering Building,
Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 433-3447, 433-3446, 433-3444, and 926-5234
Telefax No. 926-6449
prrc@tri-isys.com

(Sgd.) **Bingle H. B. Gutierrez**
IABAC-Chairperson

(PDI - August 5 2006)

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Israel jets bomb bridges, new targets

BEIRUT—WAVES OF ISRAELI AIR STRIKES DEstroyed three highway bridges north of Beirut on Friday, forcing UN relief agencies to cancel several convoys of aid for the 900,000 people displaced by the conflict.

The Israeli air force's bombing of bridges in the Christian heartlands north of the capital cut off the main coastal highway to Syria.

"It's really a major setback because we used this highway to move staff and supplies into the country," said Astrid van Genderen Stort of the UN refugee agency UNHCR. "If we don't have new material coming in, we will basically be paralyzed." Israeli raids have already wrecked the main Beirut-Damascus highway, although mountain roads still offer a perilous passage.

Prime Minister Fouad Siniora warned on Thursday that the country only had enough fuel to last another week.

With no action to end the 24-day-old war emerging from the United Nations, the Israeli army prepared for a possible push to the Litani river, some 20 kilometers north of the border, where 10,000 troops are already trying to dislodge Hezbollah.

Ferocious fighting continued in south Lebanon on Friday, the 24th day of a conflict sparked by a cross-border raid by Hezbollah in which two Israeli soldiers were captured.

Al Arabiya television said five Israeli soldiers were killed around the border village of Markaba. There was no immediate word from the Israeli army on the report.

"The thuds of explosions are continuous, warplanes are not leaving the skies. It is one of the worst days (of fighting)," a Lebanese security source said.

Israel renewed its bombing of Lebanese civil installations a day after Hezbollah attacks killed eight civilians and four soldiers, the heaviest one-day Israeli toll of the war.

At least 693 people in Lebanon and 68 Israelis have been killed in the conflict.

At least five people, including a Lebanese army soldier, were killed and 12 wounded in the bombing of the bridges, the Red Cross said. Another soldier was killed in overnight strikes on the Ouzai slum area near Beirut airport, the army said.

Bombs punched sections out of the bridges spewing rubble and twisted metal over passing cars.

Israeli air strikes also hit the Beirut-Damascus highway near the Syrian border, as well as other roads in the Bekaa Valley. Bombs shook Beirut's Hezbollah-dominated Shiite suburbs, where previous strikes had already leveled some areas.

Hezbollah's leader, Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah, offered on Thursday night to halt rocket attacks on Israel if the Jewish state ceased its bombardment of Lebanon, but he also threatened to lob missiles at Tel Aviv if Israel bombed central Beirut.

"If you strike Beirut, the Islamic Resistance will strike Tel Aviv and it is able to do so," Nasrallah said.

Israeli Defense Minister Amir Peretz ordered the army to prepare to push north to the Litani river, but Prime Minister Ehud Olmert's cabinet has yet to approve the offensive, which would go beyond a planned "security zone" in southern Lebanon.

Political sources said Olmert has so far objected to sending soldiers as far as the Litani and is not convinced it would halt Hezbollah rocket fire into Israel, one of Israel's main aims.

"No decision has been made," Brigadier-General Ido Nehushtan told Reuters." An invasion up to the Litani would be Israel's deepest push into Lebanon since it surrounded Beirut in 1982. *Reuters*

Lebanon kids bewildered by onslaughts

BEIRUT—"IS THERE STILL WAR outside?" wondered a 6-year-old boy with dark shadows under his eyes, one of 1,700 people hiding from Israeli bombardments on the asphixiating third, fourth and even fifth underground floors of a parking lot in Beirut's southern suburbs.

Mohammed Hilal has been ducking there with his family for 22 long days, since Israel launched a massive military onslaught on Lebanon and which leveled much of the heart of the suburbs where Hezbollah maintained its command headquarters.

Bunker busters and implosion bombs make any shelter unsafe, and terror spread even more after Israeli jets zoomed overhead, dropping flyers to warn civilians to leave the area because bombing would soon be extended.

In a neighborhood long deserted by its residents, nothing leads one to think that there is an underground shelter, much less that 1,700 people were hiding inside—except for the fleet of scooters parked outside.

Scooters are a trademark used by Hezbollah militants to control the streets of the suburbs.

After an obscure passage through cement stairs leading five floors below, the air becomes thicker and a surreal scene of underground life emerges as if from the movies to show a sea of families, gathered across the giant open space of the parking lot.

Each family crams a single car parking space, delineated by red parallel lines painted on the shining gray floor. Despite the air-conditioning system, most are soaking wet from the humidity.

"My house is in B3, come and visit us," a smiling 7-year-old Samah told journalists.

A teenager is skidding across a long alley, pushing a cart where two boys and a girl are giggling from the thrill of the only available amusement activity.

Shirtless men lie on their backs on the floor, listening to the news of the war on radio sets placed on their chests as they put their arms over their eyes to avoid the blinding neon lights.

Veiled women sit in circles, some chatting, others reading verses from the Koran. A girl is changing into pajamas, as her sisters hold a sheet to shield her from the eyes of the neighbors.

An elderly woman moans from the pain to her bones, as she lies on a thin rug on the ground.

"We have been living five floors below, we are sleeping on the floor of a public parking, what do you want? Her bones ache from the humidity," said her grandson, Ali.

"We cannot even go back home to shower during the day because of renewed bombardments. We can hardly clean the children with wet cloths. Can you imagine all these people taking turns in the few toilets of a public parking lot?"

Under a "No Entry" sign usually designed for cars, children scream happily as they run in all directions across the gray floor.

Despite the gloomy, near-dark underground second floor, they are gleefully playing hide-and-seek.

"We are like Nasrallah, the Israelis will never catch us," said a mischievous 7-year-old Ali.

A little girl with a pony tail is jumping on one leg along the bright-red lines delineating single parking spaces.

Instead of children's rhymes, cheerful little girls and boys chant the slogan "Allah, Nasrallah and all of the suburbs," as they giggle on a children's roundabout. *AFP*

PICTURE taken early Aug. 4 shows an Israeli air strike explosion on the southern suburbs of Beirut, a stronghold of Hezbollah. AFP

200 suicide bombers on anti-Israel missions, say SE Asian militants

JAKARTA—MORE THAN 200 ISlamic militants from Southeast Asia have been sent on missions to attack Israel's interests and countries that support the Jewish state, their leader said on Friday.

The fighters have been trained to carry out suicide bombings to revenge Israel's military strikes on the Palestinian territories and Lebanon, said Suaib Didu, chair of the Jakarta-based ASEAN Muslim Youth Movement (AMYM).

"We will limit our targets to Israel's vital interests and those that support Israel's aggression in Palestine and Lebanon. We will not carry out attacks indiscriminately," Didu told Reuters.

Hardline militant groups in Indonesia have made claims in the past of sending volunteers to participate in conflicts overseas which have sometimes proved exaggerated.

Western countries such as the United States and Britain as well as businesses could be targeted unless they ceased supporting Israel, he said.

Didu said the group was watching Australia's position on the Middle East conflict.

"If John Howard makes a statement in support of Israel, he will be a target," Didu said.

More than 3,000 people have signed up for the mission but only 217 people from Indonesia, the Philippines, Malaysia and Singapore have been dispatched abroad so far, he said.

A "show of force" of the more than 3,000 volunteers will be held on Saturday in Pontianak in West Kalimantan province on Borneo island, Didu said, adding that many of the 200-plus fighters were veterans who fought alongside Afghan fighters during the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan.

Din Syamsuddin, chair of the moderate Muhammadiyah, Indonesia's second largest Muslim organization, had said on Thursday that threats by radical Muslim groups to send volunteers to fight Israel were just "symbolic gestures" to show solidarity with the Palestinians and Lebanese.

"There are too many obstacles for these people to travel there. It is too costly and the Israeli army is no match for them," he told reporters.

But in Canberra, Human Services Minister Joe Hockey said on Friday the government was not shrugging off reports of the AMYM's plans.

"The minister for foreign affairs and the Department of Foreign Affairs are investigating what is reported in the papers today and we are treating it very, very seriously," Hockey told Australian television.

Australia is a staunch ally of the United States, with troops in Iraq and Afghanistan. While it has been targeted in attacks in Indonesia, Australia has never suffered a major peacetime attack on home soil. *Reuters*

WOUNDED Lebanese civilian is carried away at Maameltain bridge after it was targeted by Israeli air strikes, Aug. 4. REUTERS

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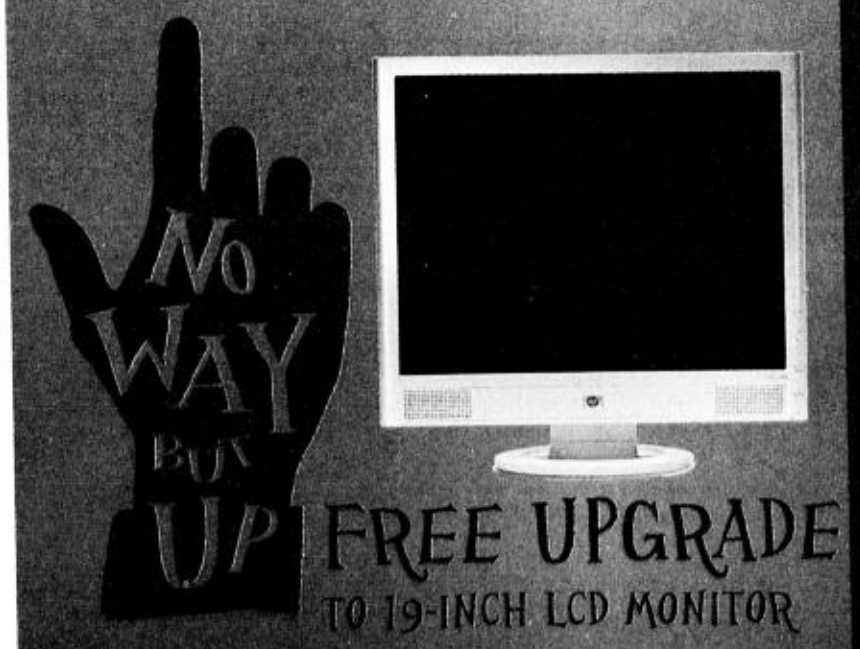

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ **US whips** Puerto Rico in world basketball tuneup /A24

SPORTS

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Editor **Teddyvic S. Melendres**

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SAMUEL Ekwe caps San Beda's dominance with a slam. ERIK ARAZAS

Lions gobble up Stags, stretch win streak to 6

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN BEDA WAS LIKE A RUNaway train yesterday, and there was no way San Sebastian could stop it.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	8	1
Letran	7	1
PCU	6	2
Mapua	5	3
S. Sebastian	3	6
Perpetual	2	6
St. Benilde	1	7
Jose Rizal	1	7

GAMES MONDAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 noon—Letran vs Perpetual (Jrs/Srs)
4 p.m.—PCU vs St. Benilde (Jrs/Srs)

The Red Lions, showing little effects of the absence of suspended forward Rogie Menor, rammed the Stags, 77-60, to grab their sixth straight victory and the solo leadership in the NCAA men's basketball at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

San Beda also moved within a win of making the Final Four outright with a league-best 8-1 record after dragging San Sebastian to a 3-6 slate.

"We are not looking at the scores or at the winning streak this time," said San Beda coach Koy Banal. "We want to stay focused and get into the two spots as soon as possible."

They're on the right track.

The Red Lions laid down their intentions early, posting a 24-12 first-quarter lead that the Stags were never able to recover from.

The lead ballooned to 21 points, 43-22, on a jumper by Samuel Ekwe, who finished with seven points, 12 rebounds and three blocks.

Yousif Aljamal anchored the Lions' run, hitting 17 points and taking five rebounds, even as rookie guard Pong Escobal chipped in 12 points, six rebounds, seven assists and two steals to make up for Menor's absence.

The 6-foot-2 Menor was slapped with one-game suspension for unsportsmanlike conduct he committed against Mark Pradas of Jose Rizal during their game last Monday.

Banal clearly wasn't happy with the announcement of the decision—which was made right on

LIONS/ A22

Reyes, 3 other RP bets advance

POOL MAESTRO Efren "Bata" Reyes, Francisco "Django" Bustamante and Ramil "Bebeng" Gallego followed up the early win registered by veteran Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat as Team Philippines started hot in the third leg of the 2006 San Miguel Beer Asian 9-Ball Tour yesterday at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center in Taiwan.

Bucking a sluggish start that saw him lag behind, 3-1, Reyes thwarted local bet Nien Rong-Chi, 9-5, in Group 3 last night as four of the five-man Team Philippines won their first matches.

Bustamante, the 2003 World Poll runner-up, whipped Thai Amnuayporn Chotipong, 9-4, in Group 2 while Gallego, the 2006 Bangkok leg winner, bested Chan Keng-kwang of Singapore, 9-7, in afternoon matches.

Earlier, Luat mastered local bet Wang Hung-Hsiang, 9-3, in Group 6.

Gandy Valle, the 2005 SMB Singapore leg ruler was trailing defending tour champion Yang Ching-Shuning at press time.

Though visibly tired

REYES/ A22

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Bulldogs test revived Tamaraws today

STANDINGS	W	L
Ateneo	5	0
UE	3	2
Adamson	3	2
UST	2	3
UP	2	3
NU	2	4
FEU	1	4

GAMES TODAY (*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)
2 p.m.—Santo Tomas vs Ateneo (Jrs)
4 p.m.—Adamson vs FEU (Srs)

COACH LEO AUSTRIA ALWAYS TAKES EXTRA caution against a team that's coming in from a breakthrough victory.

His Adamson Falcons are fresh from a convincing triumph, but Austria concedes that the Far Eastern U Tamaraws may have the mental advantage in the lone UAAP senior basketball match today.

"After FEU finally registered its first win in the series, you can expect its confidence to be back," said Austria of the rejuvenated Tamaraws. "It could be the start of their rallying point."

The Tamaraws beat the UP Maroons, 94-86, last Sunday.

Adamson will try to close its first-round campaign and go for a second-best 4-2 record against FEU today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

"We're starting to show the discipline in our endgame," said coach Bert Flores, claiming the Tamaraws' four-game losing skid is already behind them.

Their veterans stepped up in the second half as the Tamaraws drubbed the Maroons. Point guard Jonas Villanueva exploded with a career-high 28 points, while Jeff Chan and Francis Barcellano combined for 36 markers.

"Our confidence is back, but we want to keep on improving," said Flores.

The massive 6-foot-5 Bono displayed impressive form from beyond the arc and also delivered from the shaded area to lead the Falcons to a 74-62 victory over the University of Santo Tomas Tigers last Thursday.

Bono finished with 19 points and 14 rebounds, while Cabahug added 17 markers.

"With the win, we redeveloped our confidence and fighting spirit," added Austria. "We have to win against FEU to strengthen our goal to get into the Final Four."

Meanwhile, the Ateneo Blue Eaglets will shoot for a six-game sweep at the end of the first round of junior competitions at 2 p.m. today.

The Eaglets, whose senior counterparts also remain unbeaten, will gun for the feat against the UST Tiger Cubs.

Jasmine W. Payo

Fil-Ams still have shot at annual draft

ARWIND Santos

L.A. TENORIO

GABBY Espinas

JOSEPH Yeo

By June Navarro

WITH ONLY 10 DAYS LEFT BEFORE THE DEADLINE, THE CLOCK IS FAST ticking for Rob Reyes to complete his citizenship papers.

One of three foreign players with Filipino roots projected to make waves in the Philippine Basketball Association, Reyes has to beat the Aug. 14 time limit to secure the necessary documents that will prove his Filipino roots.

Failure to do so would mean shelving his PBA aspirations for another year and skipping the annual rookie draft on Aug. 20 at the Market! Market! Shopping center in Taguig.

Of the three, only Kelly Williams, a 6-foot-5 slasher with a decent touch from the outside, satisfied the requirements of the league on Fil-for applicants.

Joe De Vance, a hulking 6-foot-6 inside operator, has yet to present his citizenship documents and was also given a week before the draft to complete the prerequisites.

Last week, PBA commissioner Noli Eala wasn't optimistic that Reyes and Da Vance would meet the deadline for the draft.

According to Charlie Dy, Reyes' agent, they are hoping that the clearance from the Bureau of Immigration and Deportation and the recognition from the justice department would come out sooner than expected.

"Rob has a Filipino passport and I guess having a Philippine passport is enough proof that you are a citizen of this country," said Dy.

With Williams already qualified for the freshman lottery, a shakeup on how the teams would use their picks is expected.

Sta. Lucia Realty, owner of this year's top overall pick, seems decided on getting Arwind Santos of FEU.

Air21, which will select second and fourth overall, and San Miguel Beer (third and fifth) are now thinking long and hard on whom to exercise their draft rights.

Ateneo's Lewis Alfred Tenorio, Joseph Yeo of La Salle, PCU's Gabby Espinas and Mark Isip of FEU are almost sure to be selected ahead of the rest sans Reyes and De Vance.

"It's a terrific pool talent," said Eala.

"Out of the 51 hopefuls, at least 11 will make an impact. And when I say impact, I mean some of them will become franchise players."

Other aspirants who have the potential to make it big in the PBA are Chico Lanete, Magnum Membrere Ryan Rizada, Ronjay Enrile, Olan Omiping and Robert Sanz, Jonathan Aldave, Boyet Bautista, Aaron Aban, Al Vergara, center Mark Andaya.

Three other promising rookies–Jay Sagad, JunJun Cabatu and JR Reyes–have automatically been elevated to the pro by Welcoat Paints as part of a concession given to the rookie team by the PBA Board of Governors.

The rest of the first round draft order are Sta. Lucia at no. 6, Alaska (7th and 8th), Purefoods (9th) and Welcoat (10th).

San Miguel-RP absorbs second straight setback

DOHA, QATAR—THE SMC-PILIPINAS SQUAD pushed Latvia to the limit before bowing, 73-65, in the Al-Emadi International Basketball Championship here Thursday.

The win gave Latvia an unblemished 3-0 card and the top seeding in the semifinals of the four-nation tournament.

SMC-Pilipinas, for its part, absorbed its second setback in as many assignments.

National coach Chot Reyes was visibly gratified with the way his wards battled the heftier Latvians on both ends of the floor.

"I'm very, very happy and very proud of the guys," Reyes said after the game. "We were getting our shots and not turning the ball over."

The Filipinos, also backed by Accel, got off to a good start. Arwind Santos and Kerby Raymundo hit their stride early and SMC-Pilipinas took the first quarter, 18-14.

Latvia got its rhythm late in the second quarter, unloading an 8-0 bomb in the last minute that gave the league leaders a 42-33 edge at the half.

Kristaps Valters presided over another big tear in the third to make it 54-37. But just as Latvia appeared headed for a blowout, SMC-Pilipinas stepped on the gas. Larry Fonacier, Willie Miller and Joseph Yeo teamed up in a searing rally that had the Nationals moving within 56-60.

The scores:

LATVIA 73—S. Valters, 15, Helmanis 12, Janicenoks 11, K. Valters 9, Ciprus 7, Jahovics 5, Vecelous 4, Timermanis 4, Buskevics 3, Blums 3.

SMC-RP 65—Raymundo 12, Miller 11, Fonacier 8, Santos 7, Yeo 7, Pennisi 7, Reavis 5, Tenorio 3, Canaleta 3, Pena 2, Mamaril 0, Miranda 0.

Quarters: 14-18, 42-33, 59-54, 73-65

Reyes, 3 other RP bets advance in Kaohsiung

From page A21

from a grueling trip from Las Vegas to Manila and then to this port city, Luat delivered by taking the first two racks of the opening match.

Wang, a semifinalist in this year's Ho Chi Minh leg, scored a run in the third rack, but failed to sink the one ball in the fourth rack after a poor safety from Luat. Wang then missed on the one ball again in the fifth after a solid break, allowing Luat to pull ahead, 4-1.

The two players then traded racks until the 10th, where Luat capitalized on an exposed safety on the 7 by Wang. Luat claimed the last three racks to seal the victory.

"I knew Wang is a very good player so I had to give my best and stand a good chance of qualifying for the next round," said Luat. "Hopefully I won't have a hard time with my next match."

Luat needs to triumph over Indonesian Ricky Yang to assure himself of a place in the quarterfinals.

Yang topped the Kaohsiung leg last year and finished runner-up in two other legs. Filipinos won the other three legs: Gandy Valle (Singapore), Reyes (Jakarta) and Ronato Alcano (Manila).

The champion of each leg will earn of $10,000 while the runner-up will settle for $5,000. Aside from Ho Chi Minh City, Bangkok and Taiwan, the tour will also make a stop in Jakarta, Indonesia, for its final leg.

Marlon Bernardino, Contributor

Lions gobble up Stags . . .

From page A21

game-day—but he vented his ire on the Stags.

Banal kept key players Aljamal, Escobal, Ekwe and Alex Angeles on the floor even when the Red Lions had the game under complete control and the Stags hardly putting up a fight.

Earlier, the San Beda Red Cubs overcame the San Sebastian Staglets, 64-59. The Cubs rose to 7-1, while the Staglets fell to 5-2.

The scores:

First Game (jrs)

SAN BEDA 64—Marcelo 23, Laneta 14, Yulo 10, Cua 6, Padilla 4, Ranises 4, Cruz 2, Babilonia 1, Lobaton 0, Revilla 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN 59—Zulueta 14, Buenafe 10, Del Rio 9, Nasayao 9, Sikat 8, Penaflor 4, Soledad 4, Anthony Bringas 1, Arvie Bringas 0, Carlos 0, Mamaril 0.

Quarters: 28-10, 31-30, 43-44, 64-59.

Second Game (Srs)

SAN BEDA 77—Aljamal 17, Escobal 12, Hermida 11, Angeles 10, Gamalinda 8, Ekwe 7, Tecson 6, Maggay 4, Antonio 2, Evangelista 0, Taganas 0, Taupa 0, Canlas 0.

SAN SEBASTIAN 60—Bulawan 21, Viray 16, Vicente 8, Aquino 8, Juan 3, Delgado 2, Raymundo 2, Ballesteros 0, De Leon 0, Sagad 0, Quiamco 0, Najorda 0.

Quarters: 24-12, 36-18, 58-40, 77-60.

Accel 3-Pt Shootout fires away in Alabang today

STUDENTS AND RESIDENTS OF the cities of Muntinlupa, Parañaque, Las Piñas, Makati, and Taguig make up the bulk of at least 200 entries in the Accel 3-Point Shoot-out Challenge which starts at 1 p.m. today at the Festival Supermall, in Alabang.

Registration starts at 10 a.m.

The regional champion will get P3,000 cash and P3,000 worth of Accel products.

Accel is also staking P500,000 prize for the entry who will make a perfect score in the 1-minute round.

The top five challengers will advance to next year's national finals, said tournament director and endorser Allan Caidic.

ALL SYSTEMS GO: Members of the PNP Camarines Sur Police Office and civilian partners pose with Milo Marathon national organizer Rudy Biscocho and Milo Sports Event executive Pat Goc Ong (second and third from left, seated) after a conference on security, traffic and crowd control at the Aristocrat Hotel in Naga City for tomorrow's regional eliminations in the city. Seated from left, Nathan Sergio, chair of Kabalikat 645 Naga Central; Chief Insp. Perfecto Delima Jr. operations officer, Camarines Sur PPO; and Chief Insp. Efren Orlina, PCR officer. Standing, same order, Senior Insp. Nick Garcia, administration officer, Naga City PNP; Chief Insp. Roger Medalla, Naga City chief of police; Lito del Rosario, public safety officer; Senior Insp. Rodrigo Boromeo, Ricky Sauco, and Romeo Perez, chief of Naga City traffic division.

70 fights at Roligon 4-cocker

SEVENTY FIGHTS HAVE BEEN ROSTERED FOR A SPECIAL 4-cock derby sponsored by Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone today at the Roligon Mega Cockpit. A brand-new motorcycle awaits the fastest-win champion, according to host Rolly Ligon. Entry fee is P6,600. The Banahaw 5-Stag Derby is up next at Roligon on Aug. 22 with P400,000 at stake. For inquries, call 851-2275, 833-1638 or 852- 9812.

LPC holds fastest-win tiffs

A FASTEST-WIN ONE-COCK ULUTAN FEATURING 100 fights kicks off at 7 a.m. today at the Las Piñas Coliseum. Host Danny Alejo said a prize pot of P230,000 is at stake for an entry fee of P1,100. The breakdown of prizes: fastest win champion, P70,000; second, P50,000; third, P30,000; fourth to eight, P10,000; 9th and 10th placers, P15,000. Meanwhile, cockers and breeders seeing action in the annual Las Piñas 6-Stag Derby on Aug. 24 and 26 may bring their stags to the LPC office today and tomorrow, from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. For inquiries, call 873-1040 or 874-3910.

SPORTSWATCH

PBA looking like an SMC league?

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

FIREWORKS WERE expected in last Thursday's emergency board meeting called by newly installed PBA chair Ricky Vargas at the Chateau 1771 on Ortigas Center.

Ricky was acting on a letter addressed to him and signed by four board members who were seeking clarification regarding the ownership of Coca-Cola, the status of its PBA franchise and the trading of its key players to sister team Ginebra, using Air21 as conduit.

Through the board chair, the four governors also urged PBA commissioner Noli Eala to look not only into the technical soundness of the trade but, more importantly, into the growing public perception that the PBA is a San Miguel Corp. league.

* * *

The people from San Miguel were adamant when they learned about the letter.

The trade was above board, they argued, and no rules were broken.

As to the status of Coca-Cola, talk of disbandment had no basis in fact, they said. These were mere rumors, even gossip.

"If Coke was disbanding, we would have informed the league a year in advance, which is the rule. We are aware of the rules," said SMC sports division head Robert Non.

He was angry, just like the others from San Miguel. He said his blood pressure shot up because of the situation.

He was not the only one in that predicament.

Everyone seemed to be either angry or tense going into last Thursday's meeting.

* * *

Personally, I didn't know what to expect. Would some of the governors leave the board room sporting black-eyes and bruised lips? Would Ricky have to pay for broken glass and mirrors?

Deep down, though, I knew that my savage visions would not likely happen. In the past three decades, no matter how hot and volatile the situation was, a board meeting always ended peacefully. With everybody kissing and making up.

* * *

Fellow columnist Ronnie Nathanielsz and I were the only people from the media who stood vigil outside the function room of the Chateau.

From our table, we could see the governors, but we couldn't hear what they were discussing. The doors were shut tight. It was also hard to tell from facial expressions if the discussion was getting heated.

Each time a governor would stand up to go to the men's room, we would ask him if the fireworks had started.

The answer would always be the same: "Everything was cool. No one was losing his head."

Finally, after almost two hours, chairman Vargas let us into the function room to announce what had transpired. By his side was the commissioner.

* * *

Ricky said the trade in question was being held in abeyance, upon the consensus of the board members who left it to the commissioner to make the final decision. Each governor was given a chance to speak out.

"The board has agreed to abide by the commissioner's decision," the chair said, as he announced that, contrary to speculations, Coca-Cola was not disbanding. It was made clear, though, that the Coke franchise belonged to Coke, not SMC.

Ricky said he now finds it imperative to start, as soon as possible, his plan to review the league's constitution and by-laws.

After I left, Ronnie joined the governors who were, by this time, drinking San Miguel Beer and having fun. The tension melted.

* * *

Through the swigs, names of those who were being considered to form the committee on constitutional revision were mentioned, among them, lawyers Rudy Salud, Butch Cleofe and Melvin Mendoza, and Ronnie Nathanielsz.

The meeting ended late into the night on a harmonious note. Just like they did in the past.

Sta. Lucia's Buddy Encarnado missed the bonding part, though. He had to leave early for a previous commitment.

All's well that ends well, although I was told that the start of the discussions was very tense.

Ricky was happy to get a hundred percent attendance in his first meeting as PBA chair.

Win Column

RP judokas ready

HO CHI MINH—ARMED WITH A string of successful stints in the international front, the Philippine national judo team is confident it can once again make the country proud as it opens its campaign in the 15th Vietnam International Judo Tournament today at the Army Indoor Stadium in this bustling city. Since helping the country rule the 23rd Southeast Asian Games last year the Filipino judokas continue to flourish in various international competitions, making them one of the brightest gold medal prospects of the country in the coming Asian Games in Doha, Qatar. SEAG gold medalist John Baylon leads the country's 8-man team in the two-day competition.

2 titles at stake

TWO PHILIPPINE TITLES WILL BE put on the line on September 17 as reigning champs Sonny Boy Jaro and Florante Condes risk their belts in a big card at the Joe Cantada Sports Center in Taguig. The 24-year-old RP junior flyweight titlist will defend his crown for the third time against Along Denoy of the ALA Boxing Gym. Denoy, who is the mandatory challenger to Jaro, has campaigned in the United States, and has shown tremendous improvement since hooking up with manager Sammy Gello-ani. In his last outing, Denoy stopped veteran Alex Guevarra in the sixth round of a non-title fight, as he vowed to snatch the title from Jaro. Meanwhile, power-hitting RP minimumweight champ Florante Condes of the Aljoe Jaro Stable will take on Fabio Marfa of Sammy Gello-ani's SGG Stable in his second title defense. Condes is expected to have his hands full against Marfa. If victorious, Condes is being groomed to campaign in the US. Both fights will be covered by Fistorama. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Cariño trips Aldave

SECOND SEED MICHAEL CARIÑO disposed off Geonard Aldave in 26 moves of a Slav defense Thursday to keep a share of the lead in the second round of MCC Non-master standard chess held at the club's headquarters located at the lower second floor of St. Francis Square in Mandaluyong City. Cariño recorded his second point to stay on top along with No. 5 Rodolfo Mendoza, No. 14 Rodolfo Pates and No. 22 Ed Garrovillas of Jose Rizal University in the event organized by Metropolitan Chess Club. Pates and Garrovillas both posted upsets over No. 3 Joselito Oliveros and No. 4 Cecil Cuevas, respectively.

BATA REYES: Top seed with Django Bustamante in World Cup of Pool

Bata, Django skip RP Open

Conflict with World Cup stint

CUE MASTERS EFREN "BATA" REYES and Francisco "Django" Bustamante will skip the 2006 BSCP National 9-Ball Championship to pursue a more noble calling—carry the country's colors in the World Cup of Pool.

The unavailability of Reyes and Bustamante, who will compete as a tandem in the World Cup, was revealed yesterday by RP billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat.

"Efren and Django really wanted to join the RP Open but it was in conflict with their schedule in the World Cup of Pool," said Puyat, long-time benefactor of Reyes and Bustamante. "They've committed to join the World Cup since April."

The Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines event is set on August 15 to 20 at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium while the inaugural of PartyPoker.com's World Cup of Pool 9-ball International Championships is slated August 22-27 at the Newport Center, Newport, in South Wales.

"They (Bata and Django) need to be there by August 18 so that they could acclimatize and take a rest," added Puyat. "They have to be in tip-top shape."

BSCP president Ernesto "Ernie" Fajardo said: "The RP Open battle would have been tougher if Bata and Django were around, but they have to give priority to their country's glory."

Sans Reyes and Bustamante, Marlon Manalo and Dennis Orcollo have been tagged among the favorites to take the winner's purse of P1 million in the 2006 BSCP 9-Ball Open organized by Raja Sports president and BSCP chair Yen Macabenta.

Manalo placed second in the recent North American Open & 8-Ball Championship, where Orcollo landed third and Reyes fourth. Their efforts were worth $99,000, $80,000 and $65,000, respectively.

Other touted entries in the BSCP Open are 2004 World Pool champion Alex Pagulayan, 2005 Singapore SMB Asian 9-Ball Tour titlist Gandy Valle, 2006 Bangkok SMB Asian 9-Ball Tour titlist Ramil Gallego, 2006 Japan Open champ Antonio Lining, 2002 AZ Billiards Rookie of the Year Ronato Alcano, 2004 Fil-9 Ball Open winner Antonio Gabica and US-based Filipino pool legend Jose "Amang" Parica.

Meanwhile, a total of 32 countries will be taking part in the World Cup of Pool, where the twosome of Reyes and Bustamante is seeded No.1.

At stake is a total pot of $250,000, with the champion team receiving $60,000. The runner-up gets $30,000. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Rookie teams see action in WNCAA opener today

THE LEAGUE'S ROOKIE SQUADS WILL FACE A tough debut when the 37th Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association (WNCAA) basketball tournament unfolds today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

The Philippine Women's University and St. Francis of Assisi College, the latest members in the country's oldest tri-level league for women, will battle the tournament heavyweights in their respective divisions.

St. Scholastica's College, the Group B runner-up last year, will shoot for an opening-day win against the Philippine Women's University in the Seniors-Group A at 5:30 p.m.

Miriam College, the favored squad in Seniors-Group B after finishing third last season, will face St. Francis of Assisi College at 3 p.m.

Junior action will kick off at 2 p.m. between host St. Stephen High School and Angelicum College.

Former swimming Olympian Akiko Thompson will be the keynote speaker in the opening ceremonies at 12 noon. St. Stephen's principal Joy Dy will deliver the welcome remarks.

GAMES TODAY
(Cuneta Astrodome)
12 nn—Opening Ceremonies
2 p.m.—Angelicum vs St. Stephen's (Jrs)
3 p.m.—Miriam vs St. Francis (Srs-Group B)
5:30 p.m.—St. Scho vs Phil. Women (Srs-Group A)

Reigning Group A champion AMA Computer and defending Group B titlist San Beda-Alabang will compete in the same bracket this season. St. Scholastica, St. Benilde, Centro Escolar, Philippine Women's University and Lyceum complete the cast in Group A.

Competing in Group B are Miriam College, University of Asia and the Pacific, Emilio Aguinaldo College, Siena College-QC, La Consolacion College, Rizal Technological University, World Citi Colleges and St. Francis of Assisi College. *Jasmine W. Payo*

San Beda opens defense of Adidas Streetball title

SAN BEDA COLLEGE WILL start defending its Metro Manila Adidas Streetball Challenge crown today at the Activity Center of Market! Market! at the Bonifacio Global City.

San Beda, winner of last year's Metro Manila staging and the national finals of the country's only 3-on-3 nation-wide basketball tournament, will be missing the services of mainstays Rogemar Menor, Jay-R Taganas, and John Carlos Hermida who are all playing for the school's varsity team in the NCAA.

Other schools that have confirmed participation are Ateneo, La Salle, UST, Benedictine International School, Faith Academy, FEU, UP, PSBA, ICS, and Letran in the boys' side. Defending girls' champion University of the Philippines will be going up against Ateneo, UST, Miriam College, Trinity, Lyceum, PUP, and Faith Academy among others.

The Metro Manila elimination round champions in both divisions will join the early regional qualifiers from Davao, Cebu and Baguio in the national finals, with the boys' champion team tasked to defend the Philippine crown in the Asian championship.

Adidas Sports Marketing Manager Goody Custodio announced that the Adidas Sports Depot at Market! Market! will have a Streetball Sale with Adidas apparel and footwear available at discounted prices during the event.

This year's tournament is organized by the Futures Sports & Events Corp. It is supported by Globe Gentext , Cherifer PGM 10-22, Snickers, Powerade, Viva Mineral Water, and Blue Angel Alcohol.

A MILLION THANKS
Former Manila congressman Mark Jimenez (in white T-shirt) donates P1 million to the campaign kitty of the national bowling team seeing action in the 15th Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in December. Witnessing the event are World FIQ and Philippine Bowling Congress president Steve Hontiveros (fourth from left), PBC management head Bong Coo (to Jimenez's right), four-time World Cup champion Paeng Nepomuceno and members of the RP squad.

Army takes on S'friends in futsal

POWERHOUSE ARMY STAKES its unbeaten record against Superfriends a day before the two men's second division brackets begin their crossover quarterfinal matches in the 2006 Adidas Futsal Championship at the Blue Eagle Gym on Katipunan, Quezon City.

The Armymen, currently on top of the men's First Division with a 6-1-0 (win-draw-loss) card, are expected to have an easy time against Superfriends, which carries a 3-0-3 mark, in their 5 p.m. encounter today.

Kaya (2-0-5) and Navy ((1-1-4) clash in the 6 p.m. schedule, while second-running Air Force (5-1-1) tests the mettle of Pasargad (2-1-4) in the 7 p.m nightcap of the tournament co-presented by Cherifer Multivitamin with Blue Angel Alcohol and Snickers Chocolate Bar.

Crossover clashes

Tomorrow, AFP Selection (5-0-1) of men's Second Division-A battles Second Division-B's Thonburi FC (0-0-5) at 2 p.m., before Lions (MB), which totes a 4-0-2 card, takes on Los Merrengues (0-0-5) at 3 p.m.

The third game at 4 p.m. pits Xavier Alumni FC (4-0-2) against men's Second Division-B's Marines-B (2-0-4), to be followed by the clash between El Magistrado (4-0-2) against Pagcor (1-0-5) at 5 p.m.

The last two games for the day will have Marines-A (3-0-5) battling Archers Luce (2-0-4) at 6 p.m. and Los Borrachos (3-0-3) taking on host Ateneo (2-0-4).

SILIMAN TOURNEY

Nat'l Women's football tilt blasts off Monday

DAVAO FA OPENS ITS BID FOR A BACK-to-back title against 10 other teams as the 2006 Philippine Football Federation National Women's Championship kicks off on Monday at the Siliman University in Dumaguete City.

Out to crowd the reigning champion are last year's runner up Cebu FA, Negros Occidental FA, NCRFA, Iloilo FA and the host province Negros Oriental FA.

Davao FA defeated Cebu FA for the title in last year's tournament held in Davao.

Others expected to challenge Davao FA are Zamboanga City, Cagayan-Misamis Oriental, Iligan and first timers Oriental Mindoro and Sultan Kudarat.

PFF president Juan Miguel Romualdez will grace the 1:30 p.m. opening rite hosted by the Negros Oriental FA and the Dumaguete Football Club.

Teams have been divided into three groups that will play in a three-day elimination round to be held at the Siliman University and Foundation University football fields, respectively.

The top team in each group and the best second overall among them earn outright semifinals berth, the winner of which advance to the championship round.

The championship match will be held on Saturday at 3:30 p.m. at the Siliman University football field while the battle for third place is set earlier at 8 a.m.

The event is hosted by the Negros Oriental Football Association in cooperation with the province of Negros Oriental, the City of Dumaguete, Siliman University and Foundation University.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2/F Engineering Building, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. +632 9265233; +632 4333446
Telefax Nos. + 632 9265234; + 632 4333444

Project: Pasig River Environmental Management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program (PAREMAR)
Loan No.: Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan No. 1746-PHI
Description of Works : Construction and Development of Quezon Bridge Ferry Station in Arroceros, Manila

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from the ADB towards the cost of PAREMAR and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the Contract for the Construction and Development of Quezon Ferry Station in Arroceros, Manila.
2. The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) as the excuting agency now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the following contract packages:

Contract Package	Construction and Development of Quezon Bridge Ferry Station in Arroceros, Manila
Contract No.	EPA-LPP-040
Location	LRTA Property / Muelle Del Rio Linear, Park, Arroceros, Manila
Contract Duration	180 Calendar Days
Project Description	Construction and Development of Linear Park with Ferry Station, which include the following items of work: Site Development Works, Earthworks, Civil Works, Steel Works, Rooling Works, Ceiling Works, Architectural Works, Sanitary / Plumbing Works, Electrical Works and Pontoon Works.

3. Interested Bidders shall secure the Bid Documents and submit bids as follows:

Activity	Date	Time	Venue
Securing of (a) Eligibility Checklist or (b) submission of Letter of Intent and purchase of complete set of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 12,500.00	From Aug. 7 to Aug. 11, 2006	From 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.	PPRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Securing of additional eligibility information (if any) and inspection of Bidding Documents	From Aug. 7 to Aug. 11 2006	From 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.	
Site Inspection	Aug. 15, 2006	10:00 a.m.	LRTA Property / Muelle Del Rio Linear, Park, Arroceros, Manila
Pre-Bid Conference	Aug. 15, 2006	2:00 p.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Deadline for submission of Bids	Aug. 28, 2006	10:00 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City
Opening of Bids	Aug. 28, 2006	10:30 a.m.	PRRC, 2F MWSS Engineering Bldg., Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City

4. The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and the City of Manila shall be the implementing agencies of the Project.
5. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in *"Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans"*.
6. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
7. The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to Contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ
Executive Director
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F, MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Tel. Nos. 433-3447 and 926-5234
Email Address: prrc@tri-isys.com
Fax No. 926-5234

(PDI- July 29 & August 5, 2006)

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2006

SPORTS

US whips Puerto Rico

Quest to regain hoop supremacy gets going

LAS VEGAS, NEVADA—THE United States thrashed Puerto Rico, 114-69, here Thursday in a Basketball World Championships warm-up that launched the Americans' bid to regain global superiority in the game.

The United States rode a 31-3 scoring spurt bridging the second and third quarters to the victory in the first of five exhibition games scheduled before the 2006 World Championships begin in Sapporo, Japan, on Aug. 19.

The Americans got 18 points from Carmelo Anthony of the Denver Nuggets and 14 from Dwyane Wade of the world champion Miami Heat.

Not only did they get the last phase of their World Championships build-up off on a good note, the United States avenged a stunning 92-73 loss to Puerto Rico at the Athens Olympics.

Team USA held just a 29-26 lead after a sluggish first quarter.

After missing their first six shots and allowing two power layups by Daniel Santiago and a jumper by Carlos Arroyo of the Orlando Magic to fall behind, 32-29, the US squad took notice.

While starting to step up their defense, the Americans created frequent turnovers and turned them into points. A three-pointer by Gilbert Arenas of the Washington Wizards with 1:50 left in the half capped a 19-3 run.

The US turned 14 first-half turnovers into 19 points and held a 48-35 lead at the break.

When the second half started, the US continued its pressure defense, leading to a dunkfest.

Two straight jams by LeBron James of the Cleveland Cavaliers completed the Americans' huge burst just two minutes into the half.

The Americans travel to Ghangzhou, China, to face Houston Rockets All-Star center Yao Ming and China on Monday and Brazil on Tuesday.

From there, the Americans venture to Seoul to take on Lithuania on Aug. 13 and South Korea on Aug. 15.

Once they arrive at the World Championships, the Americans will be aiming to re-establish themselves as the dominant force in international basketball.

In 1998, Team USA finished third at the World Championships with a team stripped of NBA stars by fallout from the lockout. In 2000, the Americans won the gold medal in the Olympics, barely beating Lithuania in the semifinals and France in the final.

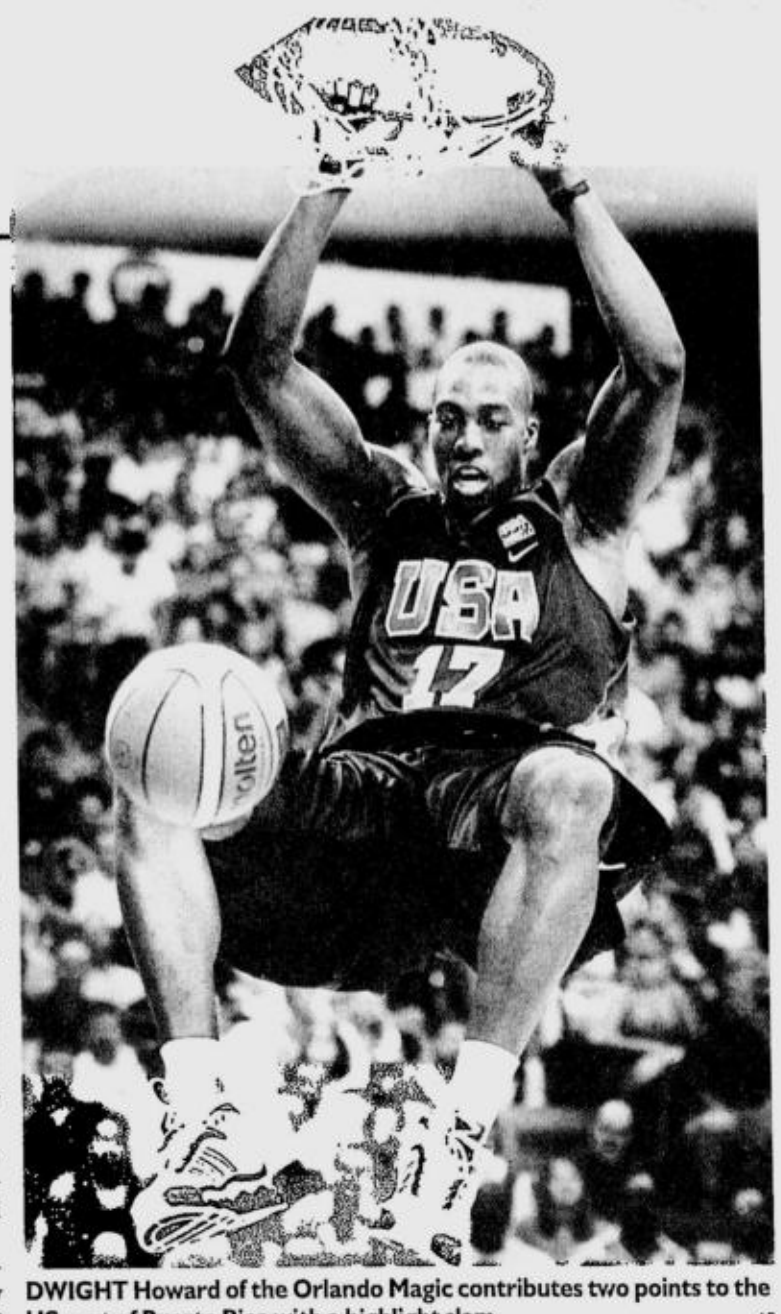
In 2002, the US finished an embarrassing sixth at the World Championships, and they ended up with bronze at the 2004 Olympics.

In the World Championships, USA is in Group D with Puerto Rico, China, Senegal, Slovenia and Olympic runner-up Italy.

Only the winner of the 24-team World Championships and the Olympic hosts automatically qualify for the 2008 Games in Beijing. *AFP*

Amare out

LAS VEGAS—AMARE Stoudemire was dropped from the US roster on Thursday for their trip to Asia, leaving 14 players available for the 12 spots on the world basketball championship team. The Phoenix Suns forward was to miss that game and return home to continue rehabbing his right knee and await the impending birth of a child. Stoudemire remained on the national team roster and is eligible to play in the 2008 Olympics. *AP*



DWIGHT Howard of the Orlando Magic contributes two points to the US rout of Puerto Rico with a highlight slam. AP

American 5 has lots of stars, no shooters

LAS VEGAS—MAKE THE 3-POINTER, win the championship.

That simple lesson, one the US men's basketball team learned during its disappointing run in the 2004 Athens Olympics, was supposed to have been taken care of by now.

Not quite.

Because of injuries or family problems, the US team will play in the 2006 Fiba World Championships in Japan later this month without its three best shooters.

Two of the NBA's best, Michael Redd and Paul Pierce, and the best shooter in college last season, JJ Redick, will miss the tournament.

Redd and Redick were chosen for the national team specifically because of their intimate relationship with the 3-point line.

US national team member Joe Johnson promises you'll hear more "swish" than "clank" despite the absence of the three.

The US will open world championship play against Puerto Rico on Aug. 19.

"We'll definitely be fine," Johnson said. "Shooting is just confidence. Anyone out here can hit the 3-pointer. With this team, with these guys, when they drive and kick, you have to be ready."

KRZYZEWSKI AP

US assistant Mike D'Antoni said he and national team coach Mike Krzyzewski discussed not having the marquee shooters this summer but neither thought it would matter in Japan.

"We have so many on this team who can hit that shot," D'Antoni said. "Joe Johnson is one of best shooters in the NBA. So is Gilbert Arenas. We have Dwyane Wade. You can go right down the line."

In Athens, teams sagged on San Antonio Spurs center Tim Duncan and clogged the lane to ward off dribble penetration. Teams dared the US to beat them from long range. With Duncan in chronic foul trouble in Greece, the US had to shoot from the outside, not always successfully.

In the medal-round semifinal game, Argentina beat the US, 89-81. Argentina went 11-for-22 from 3-point range, and the US went 3-for-11.

That 2004 team didn't have a great shooter and had just one true point guard (Stephon Marbury) to get the ball in the right hands. This team has several good scorers who can hit the shot, and two drive-and-kick point guards in New Orleans' Chris Paul and Chicago's Kirk Hinrich to get them all the ball. *New York Times News Service*

WORLD SPORTS

Weir leads Buick

GRAND BLANC, MICHIGAN—MIKE WEIR matched his best round of the season with a 9-under 63 to take the lead in the suspended Buick Open, one shot ahead of two-time defending champion Vijay Singh and three in front of Tiger Woods on Thursday. Woods had a 66. Joe Durant, Brett Quigley and Woody Austin were two shots back at 65. All of the leaders were fortunate to have morning tee times. The tournament was delayed 2 hours, 16 minutes in the morning because of stormy weather. A second delay lasted 1 hour, 36 minutes. *AP*

US: China favored

COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO—US Olympic Committee leaders painted a surprisingly downcast picture for their team at the Beijing Games, saying on Thursday that China was the favorite to win the medal count and Americans face a steep climb to remain dominant. "They'll spend more money in preparation of athletes, and they should clearly be favored to win the most medals and win the most gold," chair Peter Ueberroth said of China. The Americans have won the medal count in the last three Summer Olympics. *AP*

Phelps pips Crocker

IRVINE, CALIFORNIA—MICHAEL Phelps edged world record-holder Ian Crocker by 22-hundredths of a second Thursday lift the 100m butterfly title at the US Swimming Championships. Athens Olympic hero Phelps captured his fourth national title in three days as he triumphed in one of the meeting's marquee match-ups. His time of 51.51 seconds was a championship record, while Crocker settled for silver in 51.73. Cullen Jones captured the men's 50m freestyle title with a time of 21.94, the fastest in the world this year. Ben Wildman-Tobriner was second in 22.16 and Jason Lezak third in 22.22. *AFP*

715th worth $.2M

SAN FRANCISCO—BARRY BONDS' 715th home run ball fetched a winning auction bid of $220,100 on Thursday, much better than experts predicted. The home run moved the troubled San Francisco Giants star past Babe Ruth for second place on the Major League Baseball career list. A spokesman for Internet auction site eBay said the winning bidder was from California, but the identity wasn't immediately revealed. The ball was sold by Andrew Morbitzer, who was waiting in line for beer and peanuts on May 28 when Bonds hit the home run. *AP*

Safin finds groove

WASHINGTON—MARAT SAFIN, SHOWing signs of the form that once made him the world's top-ranked player, beat US top seed and world number five James Blake, 7-6 (8-6), 7-6 (7-5) Thursday at the ATP Washington Classic. Safin advanced to the quarterfinals of the $600,000 US Open tune-up event with his fourth victory over a top-10 foe since his return. The 26-year-old Russian remains confident he can return to the top despite the recent Grand Slam domination by Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal. *AFP*

Clijsters, Sharapova, Hingis gain

CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA—TOP-SEEDED KIM Clijsters battled past Jelena Jankovic, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, to reach the quarterfinals of the Acura Classic on Thursday.

After Jankovic leveled the set score, Clijsters broke for 4-2 in the decisive set, and needed three match points in the final game, finishing off the Serb by smashing a forehand winner.

"I was just trying to hang in there," Clijsters said.

Clijsters extended her winning streak to 22 matches in North American summer hardcourt tournaments since she lost here last year in the quarterfinals. Clijsters has won 42 of her last 44 matches in all North American hardcourt events.

In Friday's quarterfinals, Clijsters will face Martina Hingis, the former two-time winner making her first appearance here since 2001, who defeated Flavia Pennetta of Italy, 6-2, 3-6, 6-1, to uphold her record of never losing before the quarters in Carlsbad.

Second-seeded Maria Sharapova ground out a 6-4, 6-4 win over Vera Zvonareva to go 3-2 ahead in meetings between the Russians.

"From the beginning of the match, I felt like I hung in there and was really patient," Sharapova said.

Sharapova's quarterfinal opponent will be defending champion Mary Pierce of France, a 6-2, 6-1 winner over Emma Laine.

No. 4-seeded Elena Dementieva overcame 10 double faults to beat Sania Mirza of India 6-2, 3-6, 6-3 for the third straight time this year. The Russian's quarterfinal opponent will be No. 5 seed Patty Schnyder of Switzerland, who beat Paola Suarez of Argentina, 6-3, 3-6, 6-1. *AP*

LAURA Manaudou of France slices through the water in the butterfly leg of the women's 200m individual medley. REUTERS

Germans sink world record anew

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY—GERMANY set a world record in the women's 800-meter freestyle relay at the European Swimming Championships on Thursday.

The team of Petra Dalmann, Daniela Samulski, Britta Steffen and Annika Liebs finished in 7 minutes, 50.82 seconds. The previous record was held by the United States with 7:53.42, set at the 2004 Athens Olympics.

Also, Laure Manaudou of France won gold medals in the women's 200 individual medley and the 100 backstroke. She also helped France to a bronze in the 800 freestyle relay.

In the men's events, Slawomir Koczko of Poland won the 200 breaststroke while Pawel Korzeiowski was first in the 200 butterfly. Helge Meeuw of Germany won the 50 backstroke.

The 800 freestyle relay was Germany's third world record at these championships—Dalmann, Steffen, Liebs and Daniela Goetz set a world record in the women's 400 freestyle relay on Monday, while Steffen also set an individual world record in the 100 freestyle on Wednesday.

"In the end I swam full speed despite the large lead, because I feared someone could catch me," Liebs said.

After three legs, Germany led Poland by 3.11 seconds. Poland finished second in 7:56.32, while France was third, a further 0.12 seconds behind.

Manaudou won her two individual golds within a 35-minute span, and now has three golds, also having won the 800 freestyle.

Her first win on Thursday came in the 200 individual medley, in a time of 2:12.69. Katarzyna Baranowska of Poland was second and Alessia Filippi of Italy third.

Manaudou's other gold was in the 100 backstroke, timing 1:00.88. Antje Buschschulte of Germany was second, followed by Janine Pietsch.

"I'm positively surprised by my time because I missed my start, but my second lap was excellent," Manaudou said.

Among the men, Kuczko was declared the winner of the 200 breaststroke after the fastest swimmer, Loris Facci of Italy, was disqualified for failing to touch the end of the pool with both hands in one of his turns. *AP*

Veteran Inkster fires 66, takes British Open lead

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, ENGLAND—JULI Inkster carded the round Michelle Wie was hoping for at the Women's British Open on Thursday, a 6-under 66 to take a three-stroke lead.

The fact that Inkster has a daughter, Hayley, the same age as 16-year-old Wie and won her first two majors six years before the teenage star was born gave another twist to the first round of women's golf's final major of the year at Royal Lytham.

Inkster takes a healthy lead into the second round over Sweden's Maria Hjorth and Italy's Silvia Cavalleri (69).

After starting her first visit to the Lytham links with three bogeys, Wie carded a 2-over 74 to be eight shots off the lead. Other leading contenders also failed to get anywhere near Inkster's round.

Annika Sorenstam finished double bogey, bogey to go from 3-under to even par 72; Karrie Webb had an eight and two sixes on her card to finish with a 76; and Lorena Ochoa, who was 2-under at the turn, wound up with a 74.

Inkster had an eagle and three birdies to reach the turn in 30. If the American hadn't fired her tee shot into a fairway bunker at the last, she would have finished with a 65.

At age 46, Inkster is also 30 years older than Wie and is seeking to become the oldest woman to win a major on the US LPGA Tour.

"When I first started out, I thought I'd play five years and quit and have a family and head off into the sunset," Inkster said. "But I keep playing. I play 18 to 25 (tournaments) a year and make a pretty good living and enjoy what I do. If it was a grind, I wouldn't do it."

It was far from a grind on Thursday. Inkster made an eagle putt from 18 feet at the par 5 sixth, and her accurate approaches gave her five birdie putts from one to 18 feet.

"I played very well all day. It's a tough golf course. If someone had offered me a 66 I would have gone to the bar and watched," she said. "I'm very happy with the way I played. I did a lot of good things out there."

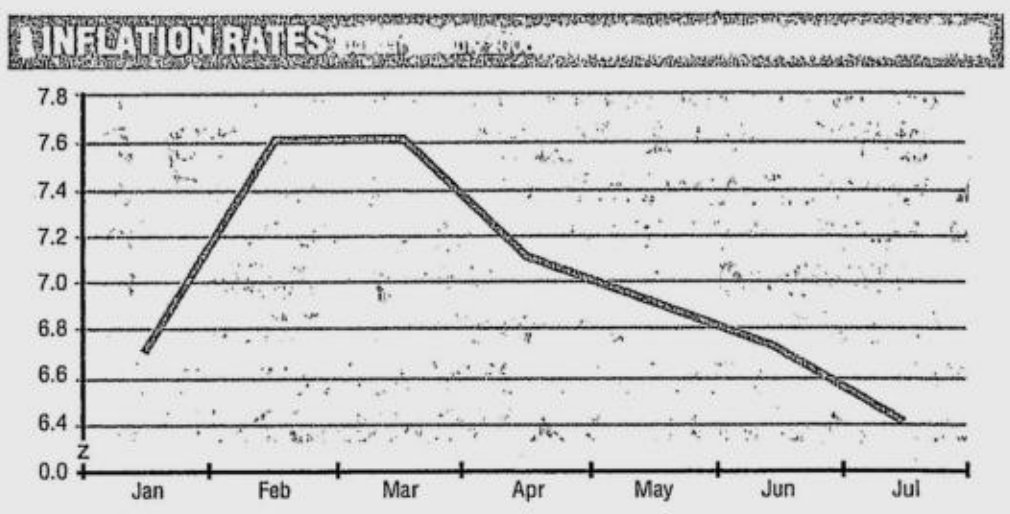
If Inkster wins her first British title, she will have the longest spread of majors in women's golf—22 years dating to her triumphs in the 1984 Kraft Nabisco and the now defunct Du Maurier Classic. She won the 2002 US Women's Open. *AP*

Website: www.inq7money.net

BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Corrie S. Narisma
Text us your feedback: inquirer biz name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart) E-mail: business@inquirer.com.ph

A new record has been set on just one full tank of Petron Xtra Unleaded.



Inflation at 2-yr low

Fears of higher interest rates ease, says BSP

By Michelle V. Remo

INFLATION SLOWED TO ITS LOWEST IN TWO YEARS in July as bumper agricultural production led food prices falling, the National Statistics Office (NSO) reported yesterday.

It said inflation eased to an annual 6.4 percent in July from 6.7 percent in June, at the lower end of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' projected range of 6.3-7 percent.

It was the lowest rate since June 2004 when it hit 5.4 percent and BSP Governor Amando Tetangco said the easing should allow monetary authorities to keep interest rates on hold.

INFLATION/ B2

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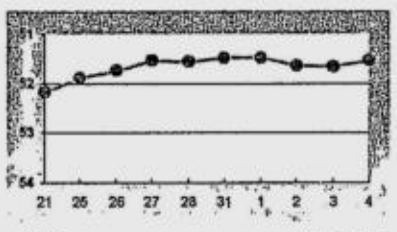


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

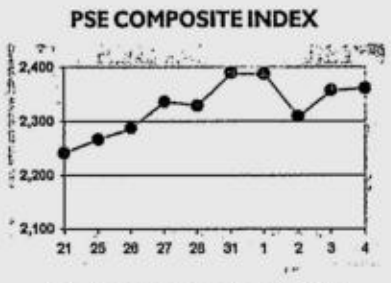
₱51.52 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 4, 2006

¥115.14 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 4, 2006

GOLD: $646.20-646.70
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 3, 2006

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares rise 0.21%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.21-percent higher yesterday after officials announced that inflation had fallen to a two-year low last month, dealers said.

They said the favorable inflation data had boosted optimism that the central bank would leave key interest rates unchanged over the medium-term.

Buying of blue chip companies set to report second-quarter earnings next week also continued helping the main index into positive territory, although the extent of buying was less than in recent days as some counters were now seen close to being over valued.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index rose 5.05 points to 2,362.60 after trading between 2,356.60 and 2,372.20. The broader all-shares index gained 1.74 points to 1,452.29.

Volume reached 5.12 billion shares worth P1.34 billion. Gainers beat losers 59 to 32, while 59 stocks were unchanged.

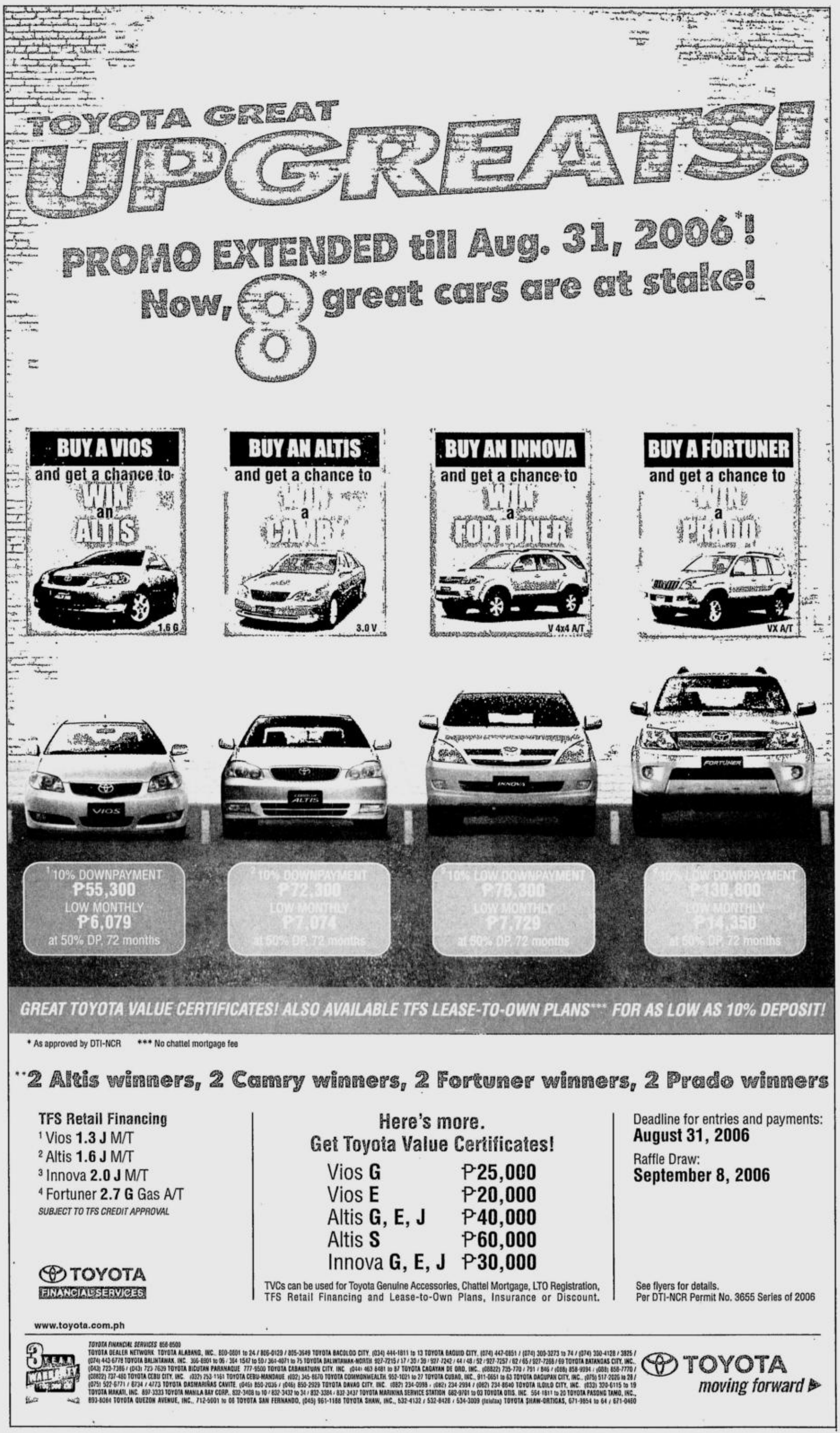
Analysts said that the reduced inflation was an indication that key interest rates would not be raised.

"The possibility of domestic interest rates rising has declined after recent data point to a decelerating trend in inflation. This should be good for the economy as a whole and for companies who have huge debts, or those who plan to borrow for expansion," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

Top-traded Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. rose P30 to P2,095 ahead of its second-quarter earnings report on Aug. 8.

SM Prime Holdings Inc. gained 10 centavos to P8.20.

Globe Telecom Inc. advanced P10 to P1,020. An official of the company said recently that the firm's net profit in 2006 would likely exceed last year's earnings of P10.3 billion, given its strong first-half performance. *AFP*



T-bill rate seen to ease this year

Declining deficit leads to drop in benchmark rate

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT HAS SCALED down its interest rate forecast based on the benchmark 91-day Treasury bill rate for this year given the declining fiscal deficit, official documents said.

Based on the new forecasts approved this week by the Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee for the purpose of fiscal programming, the 91-day T-bill rate is expected to average at 6.4 to 6.5 percent this year, lower than the previous forecast of 6.8 to 7.4 percent.

The interest rate benchmark next year is projected to slow down further to 5.5 to 6 percent. This forecast is slightly higher than the previous DBCC assumption of 4.8 to 5.5 percent.

The last time the inter-agency DBCC revisited its macroeconomic assumptions for 2006 and 2007 was in March.

The DBCC committee includes the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, Department of Finance, National Economic and Development Authority and the Department of Budget and Management.

"The latest available average for the first semester of 2006 is 5.06 percent, and the low rate may be due to gains in fiscal performance," the DBCC said.

The 91-day T-bill rate has sharply eased over the last two years from an average of 7.3 percent in 2004 to 6.4 percent last year.

The national government has posted fiscal surpluses for three consecutive months from April to June this year. This brought the fiscal deficit for the first semester to P31.5 billion, beating the programmed P90.4 billion by P58.9 billion.

The favorable fiscal performance was attributed by fiscal managers to the P15 billion overperformance versus the first semester revenue program of P456 billion as well as lower than expected expenditures by P43.9 billion.

Officials attributed the favorable fiscal performance to the P15 billion increase in the first semester revenue program of P456 billion, as well as the lower than expected expenditures, which was down by P43.9 billion.

Being the biggest domestic borrower, any improvement in the government's fiscal position reduces its financing requirements and thus eases pressures on local interest rates.

The DBCC projected a slowdown in inflation this year and next year, despite expected pressures from interest rates abroad.

SM Prime earnings hit P2.6B in 1st half

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

RENTAL REVENUES FROM NEW malls and cinema ticket sales boosted the net earnings of mall operator SM Prime Holdings Inc. by 9 percent to P2.6 billion from January to June compared with P2.4 billion in the same period last year.

In an unaudited income statement which it filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE), SM Prime said its total revenues jumped 17 percent in the first half to P6.09 billion from P5.2 billion in the same semester last year.

Of total revenues, rent accounted for the biggest slice, growing 17 percent to P5.03 billion in the first half from P4.3 billion in the same period last year.

Cinema ticket sales rose 6.9 percent to P293.2 million in the first six months from P274.26 million in the same period last year.

In the quarter from April to June, net income grew 9 percent to P1.3 billion from last year's P1.2 billion.

Also in the second quarter, gross revenues rose 19 percent to P3.2 billion from P2.7 billion in the same quarter of 2005.

Rentals from new SM supermalls that were opened last year and this year—including the group's biggest, Mall of Asia—boosted the company's rental revenues by 20 percent to P2.7 billion in the second quarter from last year's P2.2 billion.

"We are happy with the outcome of our investments and the warm reception that our markets have given to the new members of the SM Prime family of supermalls," SM Prime president Hans Sy said. "We are particularly pleased with the strong reception we received during the May 21 opening of the Mall of Asia, when close to a million people graced the occasion."

For Racks, expansion plan is in the pipeline

THE RESTAURANT CHAIN OF businessman Leo H. Prieto Jr. will aggressively expand its newly acquired steak and ribs place "Racks" in the metropolis after buying control of the brand in April.

Prieto yesterday said that his group plans to put up a Racks restaurant in Makati before the end of this year.

Prieto and his group formed Cavallino Inc., a privately held investment firm, to operate and manage Racks.

The group formally launched its first Racks restaurant at the El Pueblo complex in Ortigas, Pasig City this week.

Later, Racks will expand by four to six stores a year. To put up one store will cost roughly P6 to P8 million.

Prieto's group currently holds the master licenses for Shakey's Pizza (through International Family Food Services Inc.), Dunkin' Donuts and Tia Maria's.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ICTSI declares dividends

THE INTERNATIONAL CONTAINER Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) board has declared cash dividends of P0.25 per share but has yet to announce the port operator's second-quarter income.

In a meeting Friday, the ICTSI board decided that only stockholders of record as of Aug. 18 will be entitled to the payout. The dividends will be distributed on Aug. 25.

In May, the ICTSI board reported a first-quarter consolidated net income of P375 million, about 41 percent higher than the P266 million reported in the first quarter of 2005.

The strong performance of the company's international operations early in the year accounted for virtually all of the increase in quarterly earnings relative to the 2005 period.

Foreign operations contributed 53 percent of this quarter's consolidated net income, compared with 35 percent in the first quarter of 2005, and 34 percent for the whole of 2005.

Riza T. Olchondra

BSP won't rule out monetary tightening

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas has not ruled out monetary tightening in the coming months despite the projected slowdown in inflation in the second semester up to next year.

As the National Statistics Office yesterday announced that headline inflation softened to a two-year low of 6.4 percent in July, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the slowdown would give the monetary institution the chance to encourage economic growth which would ultimately reinforce price stability.

He hinted that the BSP could maintain its key overnight policy rates steady over the near term.

"Nevertheless, the BSP remains of the view that there are upside risks to future inflation," Tetangco said in a press statement.

He noted that world oil prices would likely remain on the uptrend in the near term, given geopolitical tensions in key oil-producing countries and the onset of the hurricane season in the Gulf of Mexico.

"These, and other cost-push developments, could increase the risk of second-round effects and adverse shifts in inflation expectations," Tetangco said. "Thus, the BSP is prepared to undertake appropriate monetary action ... when necessary. The strong growth in domestic liquidity and rising foreign interest rates will also be closely monitored in view of their impact on inflation.

The BSP's overnight borrowing rate currently stands at 7.5 percent, while the overnight lending rate is at 9.75 percent. The BSP has kept the same levels since October last year.

But the BSP continues to expect a general deceleration in inflation for the remainder of 2006, Tetangco said.

"Average inflation for 2006, however, is still projected to exceed the inflation target of 4 to 5 percent as a result of high oil prices," he said. "Latest BSP forecasts also point to the possibility of within-target inflation for 2007, barring further adverse shocks from the supply side."

Doris C. Dumlao

Gov't sticks to '08 zero-deficit plan

By Michelle V. Remo

FINANCE SECRETARY MARGARito Teves said the government would stick to the target of posting a zero budget deficit by 2008, although its latest fiscal standing allows it to expedite the attainment of a balanced budget one year ahead of the program.

The finance chief said additional revenue collection that could help trim down the deficit faster than targeted should be used to increase government spending on infrastructure to support a higher economic growth.

"If we want to have a balanced budget, we should not do it at the expense of growth and employment. We can be criticized severely for that," Teves told reporters in a briefing yesterday.

Teves said the government would maintain the government's fiscal schedule of reducing the budget deficit to P63 billion next year and to zero in 2008. This year, the deficit ceiling was set at P125 billion, although the failure of the proposed 2006 national budget may lead to a lower figure.

The statement by the finance chief did not jive with the proposal of his father, Rep. Herminio Teves, who said the government could work on attaining a zero deficit as early as next year. The younger Teves said that while the optimistic forecast of his father was attainable, having room for additional expenditures to help pump-prime the economy was a more practical move.

Data from the Department of Finance showed that in the first six months of the year, the government's budget deficit stood at only P31.5 billion. The figure was 65 percent lower than the P90.4 billion programmed for the period.

The fiscal performance in the first half allows the government to hit a deficit much lower than the P125 billion and to balance the budget by next year if expenditures would not be increased.

But the finance chief said the Arroyo administration is bent on implementing various infrastructure-development projects, as what President Macapagal-Arroyo has promised during her last state-of-the-nation address.

The projects will cost P372 billion and will be implemented from 2007 and 2010. These will be financed through internal revenues that the government expects to collect over the medium term, he said.

The P372 billion promised during the Sona will only be part of the P1.3 trillion that the government is willing to finance given its expected revenue collection over the medium term, the finance secretary said.

The younger Teves said that although the government has made a forecast that the country's gross domestic product would grow by only 5.7 percent next year, the growth figure could be higher if additional investments would come come in as a result of improved infrastructure. He said that he is personally aiming for a GDP growth figure of more than 6 percent next year.

Inflation at 2-yr low

From page B1

"The lower inflation rate is consistent with the expected easing of price pressures. While this gives the (central bank) some room for maintaining the current monetary policy stance, there also continues to be upside risks to inflation which need to be closely monitored," he said in a statement.

Consumer prices were up 0.5 percent month-on-month in July, compared to a 0.7-percent rise in June. Core inflation, which excludes selected food and energy prices, eased to 5.4 percent last month from 5.8 percent in June.

The July figure brought inflation for the first seven months of the year to 7 percent compared to 7.1 percent in July 2005.

"Weather was a big factor. We had the El Niño last year. But now, what we have is a mild La Niña that is beneficial for crops," said Dennis Arroyo, Neda director for policy and planning.

Arroyo noted that rice production in the first half, which had an impact on prices in July, rose 8.1 percent to 6.5 million tons. In the same period last year, rice production was 6.03 million tons.

Arroyo said the growth in agriculture somehow tempered the effects of the recent increase in the value-added tax rate. The 2006 inflation target of 7.3 to 7.9 percent took into consideration the impact of the higher VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent and the expanded coverage of the tax.

The BSP's policy rates currently stand at 7.5 percent for overnight borrowing and 9.75 percent for overnight lending. The rates were unchanged since October 2005.

Adjustments in its key policy rates are used by the BSP as a tool to control inflation. An increase in the borrowing rate encourages banks to park more funds with the central bank, thus limiting the amount of money in circulation and controlling demand.

"The possibility of domestic interest rates rising has declined after recent data pointing to a decelerating trend in inflation," said Lawrence de Leon of Accord Capital Equities.

"This should be good for the economy as a whole and for companies who have huge debts, or those who plan to borrow for expansion," De Leon added.

DBS Economic Research said in a client note that the Philippine central bank was expected to keep interest rates steady for the rest of the year and might even cut them by the first quarter of 2007 amid easing the inflation environment.

"Slowing inflation has definitely been a plus for the central bank in that there's been less pressure for it to lift interest rates," DBS said.

"In fact with domestic demand remaining weak, the preferable policy is to cut interest rates.

"However, we believe this is unlikely to happen until the first quarter of 2007," the note added.

"With the Fed not likely to unwind its tightening cycle until the first quarter of 2007, the (central bank) is likely to do the same in order to protect the peso's yield differentials," DBS added.

The central bank will hold its next policy meeting next Thursday, two days after the US Federal Open Market Committee meeting.

DBS said it expects the Fed to announce a pause in US interest rate hikes. *With a report from AFP*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 4, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
FINANCIAL BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	190,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53.5	53.5	53	53	337,900
China Banking Corp.	885	890	885	890	4,180
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	2,250,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	84	84	82	82	198,000
International Exch. Bank	40	40	40	40	1,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38	38	37.5	38	568,500
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	55	55	55	55	500
Philippine National Bank	35	35	35	35	11,500
Phil. Savings Bank	41	42	41	42	1,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	17.75	17.75	27,000
Security Bank Corp.	47	49	47	48.5	353,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	44.5	44.5	44.5	44.5	1,300
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	50,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	318,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	6,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	29	29	25,100
Manulife Financial Corp.	1580	1590	1580	1590	200
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	430,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	213	213	213	213	5,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1950	1950	1940	1940	850
Ivantage Corp.	1.32	1.38	1.32	1.36	2,624,000
INDUSTRIAL ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42.5	42.5	42	42.5	564,700
First Phil Hldgs Corp	43.5	44.5	43.5	44	734,700
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	15.75	111,100
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	25.5	24.75	25	1,625,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.5	7,299,000
Petron Corp.	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.35	4,679,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	110,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	4,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	20,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.75	23	22.75	23	22,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32.5	33	32.5	33	388,600
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	688,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65.5	65	65.5	109,600
San Miguel Corp. B	71.5	72	71.5	72	129,400
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19.25	18.75	19	1,965,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1,000,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,530,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	2,601,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	1,157,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	17,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	90,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	53,880,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.075	0.07	0.075	5,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	48,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	420	420	417.5	417.5	54,650
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.55	250,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	35,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	6,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	1,166,000
APC Group Inc.	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.23	1,260,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.94	0.92	0.93	1,290,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.85	180,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	50,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	23,300
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.1	5,680,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	758,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	103,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6	6	5.9	6	480,000
Medco Holdings	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	570,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	14,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.185	0.19	2,420,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	250,000
Singphil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	12,800,000
SM Investments Corp.	223	223	217	217	88,280
South China Resources Inc	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	210,000
Unigil Res. & Holdings Co	0.0725	0.075	0.0725	0.075	5,300,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.12	0.175	0.12	0.155	56,250,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	10,707,300
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	40,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	5,235,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	4,890,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	310,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28	7,470,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.46	0.46	18,080,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	22,200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.42	1.36	1.36	7,432,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	46,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	50,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	140,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.24	0.21	0.24	1,090,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.4	0.4	560,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.52	1.6	1.52	1.54	58,342,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	6,380,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	250,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.15	0.225	0.15	0.205	20,410,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	157,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.44	0.48	0.44	0.45	100,880,000
SM Development Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	165,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	2,490,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.0775	0.1	0.0775	0.0925	13,000,000
SERVICE MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16.75	17.25	16.75	17.25	118,300
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	71,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.34	8,626,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1010	1020	1005	1020	121,840
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.7	3.75	5,161,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2075	2100	2070	2095	86,540
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.195	0.18	0.18	1,610,000
Ionics Inc.	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.96	213,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	5,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	102,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.031	102,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	641,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	150,600
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	1,052,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.42	8,882,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.235	0.25	0.235	0.25	600,000
Philippine Racing Club	3	3	3	3	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.58	6,130,000
EDUCATION					
iPeople Inc	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	8,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3.05	3.5	3	3.5	26,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.16	2.16	218,000
Paxys Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	199,400
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.15	4.3	4.15	4.15	2,750,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.25	4.3	4.15	4.2	868,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	141,000,000
Atlas Cons Min & Dev't	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8	477,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	3,020,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	6,690,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.024	402,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.028	0.026	0.028	351,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0095	0.011	0.0095	.011 2	,861,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.15	4.35	4.15	4.25	8,070,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.35	7,091,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	122,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.54	1,800,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.62	0.56	0.62	490,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	430,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	499,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	53,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.26	1.36	1.26	1.32	4,119,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.36	1.24	1.32	2,073,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	1,503,600
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	102	102	101	101	19,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	11	11	11	11	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT 10% Pref Series A	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,300
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	17	17.5	17	17.5	181,400

CURRENCIES

August 4, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.780640	1.000000	51.6380
Japan	Yen	0.006792	0.008700	0.4493
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473380	1.887400	97.4616
Hongkong	Dollar	0.100431	0.128652	6.6433
Switzerland	Franc	0.634409	0.812678	41.9651
Canada	Dollar	0.693841	0.888810	45.8964
Singapore	Dollar	0.494953	0.634035	32.7403
Australia	Dollar	0.593191	0.759878	39.2386
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.070774	2.652661	136.9781
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.208171	0.266667	13.7702
Brunei	Dollar	0.493389	0.632031	32.6368
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000110	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020619	0.026413	1.3639
UAE	Dirham	0.212540	0.272264	14.0592
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.281000	66.1483
Argentina	Peso	0.254280	0.325733	16.8202
Brazil	Real	0.357436	0.457875	23.6437
Denmark	Kroner	0.134043	0.171709	8.8667
India	Rupee	0.016788	0.021505	1.1105
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212130	0.271739	14.0321
Mexico	New Peso	0.071279	0.091308	4.7150
New Zealand	Dollar	0.483129	0.618888	31.9581
Norway	Kroner	0.127057	0.162760	8.4046
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012961	0.016603	0.8573
South Africa	Rand	0.113550	0.145457	7.5111
Korea	Won	0.000809	0.001036	0.0535
Sweden	Kroner	0.108536	0.139034	7.1794
Syria	Pound	0.015038	0.019264	0.9948
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023758	0.030434	1.5716
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000364	0.000466	0.0241

NBI to help curb corruption in revenue agencies

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL BUREAU OF INvestigation (NBI) has agreed to assist the Department of Finance in conducting lifestyle checks against government revenue collectors suspected of corruption.

Finance Undersecretary Gaudencio Mendoza Jr., head of the Revenue Integrity Protection Service (RIPS), told reporters that the NBI has already assigned six of its personnel to help in the conduct of lifestyle checks. Of the six, four are investigators and two are lawyers, Mendoza said.

The NBI personnel started working for the RIPS last Aug. 1.

The finance official said RIPS would be giving the NBI personnel names of revenue officers and employees suspected of corruption. RIPS is set to open hotlines for concerned citizens to contact in case they know of revenue personnel engaged in corrupt activities, he added.

Mendoza said that with the help of the NBI, RIPS targets to charge before the Office of the Ombudsman at least 50 people suspected of corruption within a year.

RIPS is the unit of the DOF tasked with conducting lifestyle checks on suspected corrupt officials or employees of revenue-collecting agencies, especially the bureaus of Internal Revenue and of Customs. Lifestyle checks are basically done by comparing one's income with his or her assets.

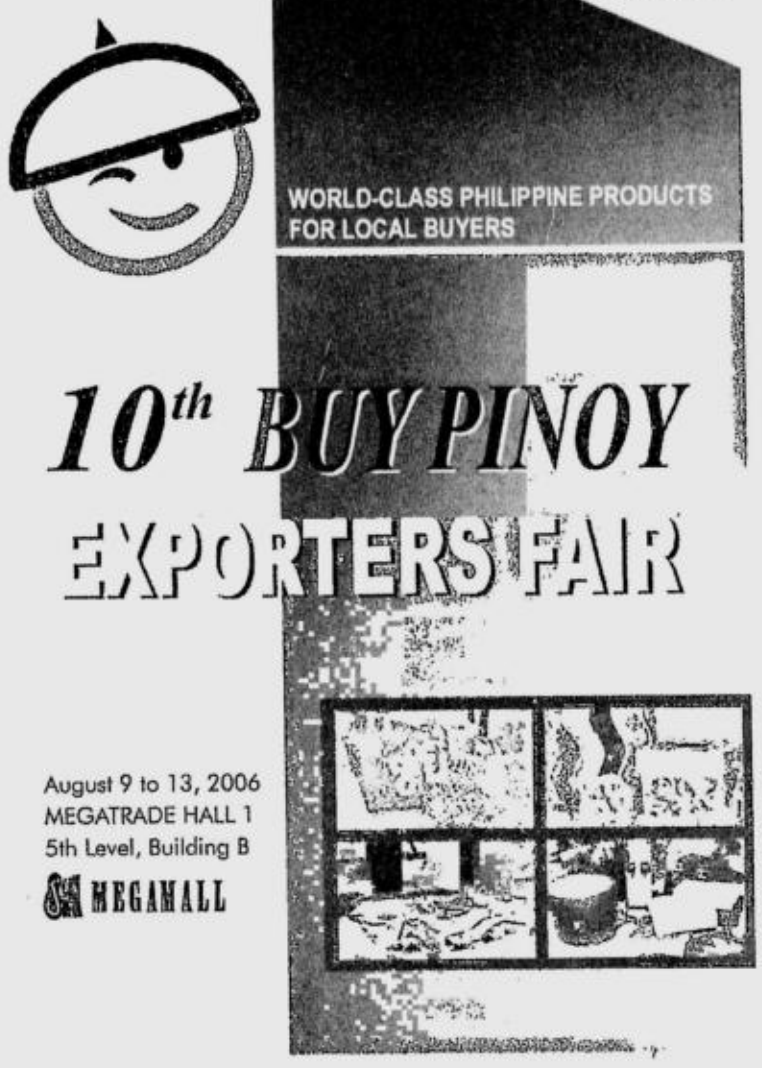
Efforts to intensify the government's crackdown on corruption followed the recent approval of a $20.38-million grant from the US government to address problems of corruption in the Philippines.

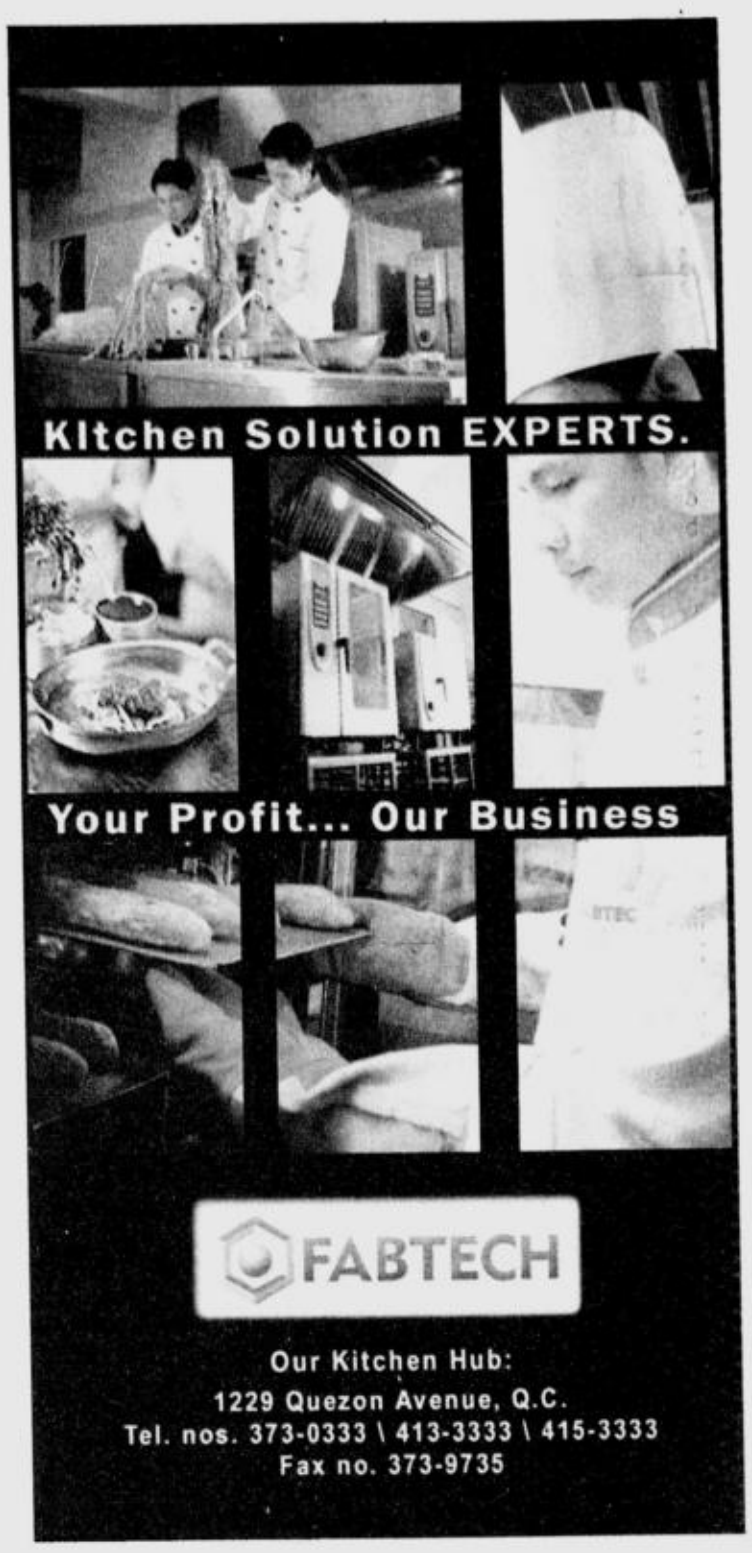
The grant, given through and to be administered by Millennium Challenge Corp. (MCC), will be disbursed sometime in September and will be used to enhance the operations of the RIPS and the Office of the Ombudsman, and to boost the capability of the government's other anti-corruption programs like the Run After Tax Evaders (RATE) and the Run After the Smugglers (RATS).

Of the grant, $1.4 million will be for RIPS, $9.4 million for RATE, $3.1 million for RATS, and $6.475 million for the Office of the Ombudsman.

While RIPS covers corrupt government workers, RATE and RATS are intended to crack down on unscrupulous members of the private sector, particularly tax evaders and smugglers.

To complement the US grant, Malacañang has committed to release P1 billion in counterpart funding for the government's anti-corruption programs. The Department of Budget and Management has been directed to release the funds soon, Mendoza said.





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'Penguin walk' betrays osteoarthritis sufferers

By Tessa R. Salazar

A WADDLING PENGUIN may look cute and lovable. But when you see a human hobble like that, there's definitely something wrong inside.

Rheumatologists and orthopedic surgeons can instantly identify the problem: osteoarthritis.

"You see in the streets how many bow-legged elderly you see waddling around? All of them have osteoarthritis. Who is seeing a doctor? Probably one out of 10," says Dr. Hazel Reyes, rheumatologist and clinical associate professor of UP-PGH. Rheumatologists are specialists in the diagnosis and medical treatment of osteoarthritis.

"When bow-legged people stand and a basketball can fit in between their legs, then they have osteoarthritis," says Dr. Jose Fernando C. Syquia, orthopedic surgeon at St. Luke's, University of Santo Tomas and Cardinal Santos Hospitals.

Syquia adds that pain, stiffness and deformities are the visible and felt symptoms affecting sufferers.

Most common form

Osteoarthritis is the most common form of arthritis. The word is derived from the Greek "osteo," meaning "of the bone," arthro" meaning "joint" and "itis" meaning inflammation—although many sufferers show little or no inflammation in the affected joints.

Osteoarthritis is a condition in which low-grade inflammation results in pain in the joints, caused by the wearing out of the cartilage that covers and acts as a cushion where separate bones meet in a joint.

Osteoarthritis can occur in any joint of the body, although osteoarthritis predominantly occurs in the knees, the hips, in the lumbar spine, cervical spine and in the hands (distals and Heberdens nodes), according to Dr. Leslie M. Reyes, chair of the Philippine Board of Orthopedics.

The Food and Nutrition Research Institute prevalence survey indicates that 6.5 percent of the population has arthritis while 0.5 percent has osteoarthritis. Rheumatoid arthritis sufferers are placed at 0.6 percent and gout at 1.6 percent. More than 3 percent of 70-year-olds and above and 1.7 percent of 60 to 69-year-olds suffer from osteoarthritis.

FNRI research head Fely Velandria says that FNRI used a questionnaire in determining the prevalence of arthritis within the population and that no physical measurement was done.

Associated with aging

The problem with osteoarthritis, laments Hazel Reyes, is that it has been long associated with the natural course of aging. She says this view has led to the disease being "underreported, underdiagnosed, undertreated and underrecognized."

Says Reyes: "Unfortunately (even) a lot of doctors think osteoarthritis is part of normal aging. That's incorrect. People are not putting much relevance (on the disease), and a lot of patients are suffering. It should be an important public health concern because we have a (large) aging population."

Reyes, Syquia, Dr. Leslie Reyes and members of the Philippine Orthopedic Association and the Philippine Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine were present at an Aug. 2 special forum lecture of Dr. Jean Yves Reginster, a director for World Health Organization's Center for Public Health Aspects of Rheumatic Disorders.

Reginster, a Belgian surgeon whose field of interests and research involve osteoarthritis and osteoporosis, discussed his research on osteoarthritis symptoms, proper management, treatment and prevention. His recent findings include the efficacy of what he calls the "disease-modifying" osteoarthritic drug glucosamine sulfate.

Reyes stresses that osteoarthritis should not be part of normal aging. She also says the correct diagnosis is important, as there are more than a hundred types of arthritis.

Treatment costs

Reyes says the cost of a nonsurgical treatment for osteoarthritis here is almost the same as in Europe. A Philippine General Hospital study estimated the cost to be over P30,000 for a whole year. This includes medicines, doctor and laboratory fees. According to Reginster, the cost of osteoarthritis treatment in Europe is estimated at 600 euros or about P36,000.

"You can just imagine how much more it would cost in private hospitals," Reyes says.

Reyes says that in Europe, however, treatments are subsidized by governments.

The worst case of osteoarthritis would also involve the most costly treatment—a joint replacement.

Syquia estimates bills could run as high as P300,000 to P350,000 including implants if done in a private tertiary hospital. This amount, he says, still doesn't take into account the income lost by the patient because of the disability.

Exercise

The good news for osteoarthritis sufferers, Syquia says, is that avoiding high costs of treatment and surgery is largely in the hands of the patient. Two key words to look out for are weight and exercise—not having too much of the former and getting enough of the latter.

"Exercise is important to keep the muscles strong. Muscles have a shock-absorbing capacity. If you walk a lot and your muscles are strong, they help absorb the impact of your steps," he says.

Leslie cautions people who are 50 years old and above, however, to not go on high-impact sports such as basketball or soccer.

"These activities will jar your knees and hips. One can modify sports activities such as walking or slight jogging instead of running, and nonweight-bearing exercises such as swimming," he says.

Brighter prospect for research and science

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

WE DREAM TO BECOME A FIRST-world country. There's no harm dreaming, unless we make no serious effort to make this dream a reality. Then, we'll just remain frustrated for generations to come. One of the engines that can catapult our country toward this dream is science and technology (S & T). Unfortunately, reaping gains from S & T takes a long process with a lot of backbreaking research involved. A nation bogged down with so many socioeconomic problems may be pushed against the wall settling for quick fixes.

We're happy to note that the government is starting to realize that strengthening the national effort in long-term research that can create new solutions should be one of the cornerstones of the strategy for advancing toward a first-world status.

In all fronts of science, we always meet scientists, young and old, with brilliant ideas which remain a hypothesis because their research works never get off the ground for lack of funding. We may have the engine, but we don't have the fuel to run it.

The government subsidy for research should be at least one percent of the gross domestic product. We're allocating much less than that at the moment. The private sector will really have to do its share in funding long-term research and development in this country.

Optimistic

Hopefully, things will change from hereon. And there's good reason for our scientists to be optimistic about future prospects in this country, if the President fulfills her initiative of advancing the cause of S & T as she plans to. In her State of the Nation address this week, she said "... a country that wants to be a player in the global economy needs bold and well-funded research and development initiatives of its own. To this end, we will continuously increase the budget for science and technology, and education. For in today's global economy, knowledge is the greatest creator of wealth."

MEDICAL FILES

The Philippine Science Journalists Association (PSciJourn), an association of media practitioners in science, was also jubilant about the President's pronouncement and has expressed its support to the government's effort to make S & T the foundation of economic development and progress through research and development, and through the development of science culture among our people. Since its founding five years ago, the PSciJourn has been advocating and working to link science and technology to the grassroots.

But the current lack of funding and resources should not be an excuse for our S & T engine to remain idle. I guess we can also look at the glass as half-filled rather than half-empty. And visiting the recently concluded National Science and Technology Week exhibit at the Philippine Trade Training Center gives one a heartening thought that our scientists are making big strides even with small shoes.

Technologies

The Department of Science and Technology showcased a host of locally developed technologies which highlighted the role of S & T in saving and enhancing lives. Such was the theme of this year's exhibit and some of the featured technologies were a unique orthopedic hospital bed that can turn sideways, tree barks that remove toxic metals, Romblon-developed coco-methyl ester, information systems for interactive climate and weather queries, and rapid earthquake damage assessment and alerts on severe weather conditions.

Other interesting technologies that were featured in the exhibit area included interactive audio-visual science and math educational materials, nuclear-based air pollutant analysis technique; lung fluke infection medical investigation; and nutrition-packed food products such as soybean gel and soy-peanut spread.

Our scientists are apparently trying to make the most of the current situation. And we look forward to brighter times ahead for them.

Battling lahar, driftwood, disease

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

ALL IS NOT LOST FOR LAHAR-ravaged areas, especially with creative scientists like Dr. Wilfredo Barraquio, former professor of the University of the Philippines Diliman's Institute of Biology, who dreamed of using microbes to restore damaged places. Posthumously conferred the Sixth Hugh Greenwood Environmental Science Award by the National Academy of Science and Technology (NAST), Barraquio worked on fungi (yes, fungi) which could destroy poisonous stuff and promote vegetation in the lahar areas.

Despite the inhospitable environment, these fungi not only thrive in wild sugarcanes growing along the Pasig-Potrero River in Barangay Maniag-Pasig in Pampanga, but support the growth of legumes as well. For Barraquio, the signs were clear: we should plant sugarcane to encourage the growth of these fungi, and legumes alongside them. According to Barraquio's wife Virginia, a scientist at the UP Los Baños, her husband envisioned helicopters scattering seeds and spores to make the area come alive again.

Bacteria vs poison

In another experiment, Barraquio's team noticed that the dye Congo Red used in handmade paper making could be found in canals near a paper factory in Biñan, Laguna. The team placed bacteria in water samples, and voila! the water turned clear as the bacteria ate the toxic elements. What's more, as the bacteria continued eating the toxins, nutrients for plant growth started forming in the canal. Bacteria fighting against poison—an ideal template for our polluted world.

Past president of the Philippine Society for Microbiology, Barraquio was also deemed Outstanding Microbiologist for 2002. NAST instituted the Hugh Greenwood Environmental Award to recognize outstanding research works that contribute to environmental protection and conservation. Winners receive $1,000 from Dr. Greenwood, founder of UK-based Children's Research Fund and P1 million from the DOST.

Dominant provider

Now for another environmental success story. Six years ago, J. Woodcraft was a fledgling backyard enterprise, but with the help of technology, it is now a dominant provider of quality driftwood furniture in Masbate, Bicol. Gonzalo Albao Jr., a former scout ranger went about it the right way, securing permits from even the DENR to operate in Dimasalang town to extract driftwood with neighboring areas. For the first five years, the workers did not have machines, so had to create each piece of furniture manually. But their creativity led them to trade fairs, and eventually a display center in Albao's wife's hometown of Calamba, Laguna to attract Manila-based customers.

Albao knew he needed help to expand, so he approached the staff at the Provincial S & T Center who told him about the DOST's Small Enterprise Technology Upgrading Program (Setup). Under the program he received P170,000 last December for production equipment, and now feels confident to compete with big producers in Southern Luzon.

Disease fighters

Speaking of competition, the biggest battle of all may be mankind's fight against disease. Prevention, as they say, is the best cure, and we repeat here our parents' dictum to eat more fruits and vegetables. Food and Nutrition Research Institute chief research specialist Celeste Tanchoco and colleague Nieves Serra authored a book "Fundamentals in Medical Nutrition Therapy," which outlined the various disease fighters (called phytochemicals) found in simple foods. The list is heartening: capsaicin in hot pepper can reduce fatal heart clots in the heart; saponins in potatoes and tomatoes may help the immune system; phytic acids in whole grains and tannins in tea and grapes can act as antioxidants. Best of all, there are cancer fighters galore: indoles in broccoli; isothiocyanates in cabbage and cauliflower; lignans in whole grains and flaxseed; monoterpenes in citrus fruits; lycopene from tomatoes.

But surveys show that fruits and vegetables account only for 6 percent and 13 percent of daily food intake for most Filipinos. A pity, for these foods may hold the key to a long and happy life. My thanks go to Rea Saludadez and Framelia Anonas of the S & T Media Service for providing invaluable information.

E-mail the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.

A unique food mix to help patients recover faster

By Charles E. Buban

WILL HOSPITAL PATIENTS AND THOSE with dysphagia (difficulty in swallowing) be able to finally say goodbye to soft, pallid and bland diet?

Puréed diet are often recommended for individuals with swallowing problem, which may arise as a consequence of conditions including stroke, multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease.

But with the traditional way of preparing puréed meal—through boiling and mashing (of fruits and vegetables), as well as overcooking—these individuals usually end up having foods deprived of their original vitamin and mineral content, color and most often, taste.

"It is important to prevent recovering patient from becoming malnourished. Because nutrition is so vital to recovery, it is important to offer them with meals that have the correct nutritional profile and yet visually appealing and appetizing," said Dr. Reynaldo Rey-Matias, a physical and rehabilitation specialist from St. Luke's Medical Center.

Instant thickener

To address this challenge, Fresenius Kabi Philippines Inc. (an affiliate of the Germany-based infusion therapy and clinical nutrition giant) through its distributor, Zuellig Pharma Corp., recently introduced Thick & Easy, a starch-based instant thickening product that when added to food and fluids, results in a dense, cohesive consistency that allows patients to easily swallow and at the same time, appreciate their food.

This particular product (available only at selected Mercury Drugstores), thickens all types of hot and cold foods and liquids without affecting taste, achieves the puréed food consistency necessary for safer swallowing as well as releases 98 percent of available fluid after consumption (to help prevent dehydration).

According to Fresenius Kabi Philippines, Thick & Easy has no taste and can be mixed to a variety of food to achieve a wide range of consistencies ranging from syrupy to custard- or pudding-like texture.

The product can also be used as a soaking solution for biscuits and breads so dysphagic patients can easily feed themselves and partake in a variety of food. Moreover, the prepared food can also be frozen, thawed and re-heated, the company added.

Improving quality of life

"More than being a conventional nutritional aid, a product like Thick & Easy may improve the quality of life of both the patient and the caregiver by allowing the patient the dignity of enjoying appetizing meals and making it easy for the caregiver to prepare nutritious meals for their patient," said Rey-Matias.

With Thick & Easy, food can be prepared in bulk and can be used in standardized menu. Since it also has a shelf life of three years, this makes Thick & Easy time-saving and cost-effective.

Rey-Matias advised that it is best to ask a doctor directly if a patient suffers from dysphagia since one study found that only 2 percent of dysphagic patients especially under long-term care are identified with the condition with the rest failing to receive proper care.

He said this is crucial because one of the most important decisions a doctor could make for the patient with dysphagia is the nature of their diet, oral or nonoral, and if oral, what type of oral intake.

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Lou de Quiroz had a quiet accounting job with a multinational company for 10 years before joining Ayala Life. "I was quite content with my job as a financial analyst. For 10 years I was used to getting regular pay -- every 15th and 30th of the month. Sure income," she says. "Then an opportunity knocked on my door. I started working part-time as an insurance agent. To my surprise, in only two weeks time, I earned a commission which is equivalent to my salary for one month. I thought: *Wow, ang dali pala kumita ng pera dito* (it's so easy to make money here)! But, still, I was hesitant to resign, fearing that I'd lose the security of my monthly salary. I prayed hard, and finally I made a decision."

There's been no stopping the indefatigable de Quiroz, who sells insurance even when she's vacationing in Baguio. She has been a Top Producer since 1996 and a Top Branch Manager since 2005. Within company circles, she's known as the "SSI Queen", as she has consistently produced big sales via "Salary Savings Insurance" or salary deduction payment schemes.

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Nelia Nemenzo of Bacolod City joined Ayala Plans seven years ago after seeing a recruitment ad in a newspaper. Her reason: the Ayala name. "Ayala is the oldest business house in the country. Its financial strength is beyond question," she says. "Ayala Plans is 100-percent Filipino-owned, and is here to stay to fulfill its commitment to serve the Filipino public."

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Babes de Guzman worked in various units of BPI's head office for two decades, earning a master's degree in Information Science along the way. She recalls never having any interest in selling life insurance. A relentless Ayala Life branch manager finally convinced her to attend a briefing. "I was open to new challenges. And I thought *mas maganda yata ang magiging income ko dito* (maybe my income here will be better)," she said.

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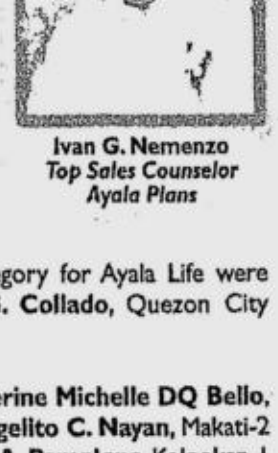

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Aside from de Quiroz, leading the Branch Manager category for Ayala Life were **Augusto L. Francisco**, Makati-1 Branch; **Alejandria G. Collado**, Quezon City Branch; and **Anna Lisa L. Duran**, Makati-5 Branch.

Topping Ayala Life's Agency Manager category were **Catherine Michelle DQ Bello**, Makati-2 Branch; **Renato C. Duran**, Makati-5 Branch; **Angelito C. Nayan**, Makati-2 Branch; **Ma. Loida Meimban**, Kalookan-2 Branch; **Marilyn A. Pamplona**, Kalookan-1 Branch; **Araceli B. Castrence**, Makati-1 Branch; and **Aimee Lynn D. Festejo**, Makati-5 Branch.

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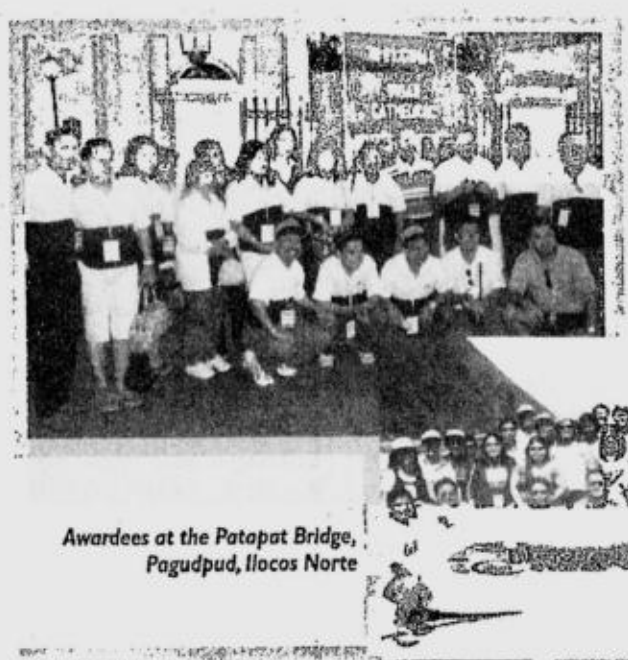

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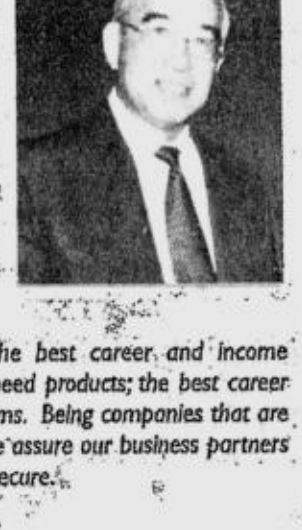

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

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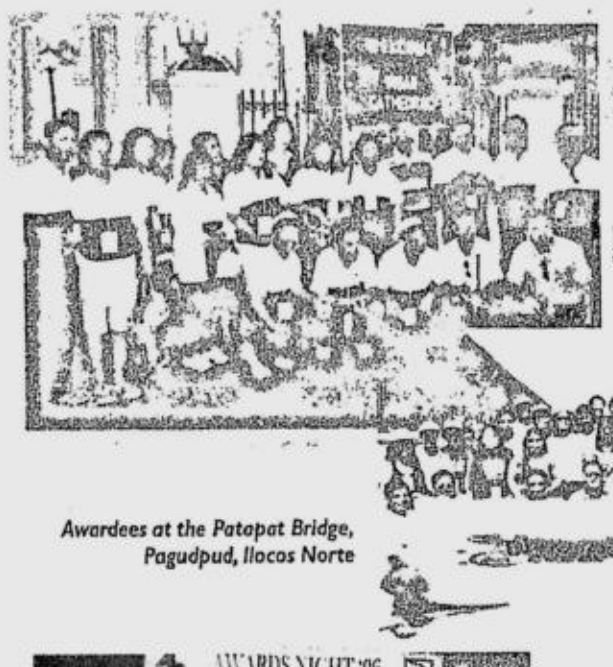

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID

The Social Security System is inviting offers to purchase by way of sealed bids the following properties:

ITEM NO.	DESCRIPTON	LOCATION OF PROPERTY	MINIMUM BID
1	250 sq.m. TCT No. T-101342 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 1064-H-2-0-23, #8 Aguila St., JJ Gonzaga Subd., Mansilingan, Bacolod City	P 308,600.00
2	278 sq.m. TCT No. T-114667 3 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained Split-level bungalow	L 19 Blk. 18, Cottage Rd., Mansilingan, Bacolod City	291,700.00
3	339 sq.m. TCT No. T-126850 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated 2-storey res.	L 22 Blk. 3, Eagle St., Olympia Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	435,800.00
4	343 sq.m. TCT No. T-126847 3 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 2 Blk. 9, Ramylu Village, Tangub, Bacolod City	545,600.00
5	1,000 sq.m. TCT No. T-128192 4 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 18 Blk. 14, #6 Earth St., Puentebella Subd., Taculing, Bacolod City	923,500.00
6	420 sq.m. TCT No. T-104647 & T-104746, 3 BR with 2 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 1614 Blk. 4-A-2 & 3, Medel Subd., Tangub, Bacolod City	503,000.00
7	231 sq.m. TCT No. T-114942 LOT ONLY	L 10, San Juan-Jalandon St., Bacolod City	231,000.00
8	275 sq.m. TCT No. T-132022 2 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 5 Blk. 1, Ramylu Village, Tangub, Bacolod City	354,900.00
9	240 sq.m. TCT No. T-132020 2 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 17 Blk. 1, Cardinal St., Olympia Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	288,000.00
10	217 sq.m. TCT No. T-137052 LOT ONLY	L 17 Blk. 14, Florenceville Subd., Tangub, Bacolod City	195,300.00
11	300 sq.m. TCT No. T-159196 2 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 4 Blk. 12, Florenceville Subd., Tangub, Bacolod City	296,600.00
12	172 sq.m. TCT No. T-105947 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 8, #5 Jimena Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	224,400.00
13	172 sq.m. TCT No. T-132018 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 7, Jimena Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	211,200.00
14	271 sq.m. TCT No. T-117164 LOT ONLY	L 16 Blk. 9 Maya St., Olympia Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	352,300.00
15	172 sq.m. TCT No. T-108529 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 6, Jimena Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	211,200.00
16	243 sq.m. TCT No. T-131511 2 BR with 1 T&B, Unsafe for occupancy	L 5 Blk. 2, Celita Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	246,700.00
17	326 sq.m. TCT No. T-131510 4 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated 2-storey res.	L 5A Blk. 3, Dove St., Olympia Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	427,400.00
18	201 sq.m. TCT No. T-135373 3 BR with 2 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 5, Jimena Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	308,600.00
19	852 sq.m. TCT No. T-86081 LOT ONLY	L 12 Blk. 2, Cor. Earl Caroll-San Juan Sts., San Sebastian Village, Sum-ag, Bacolod City	681,600.00
20	200 sq.m. TCT No. T-122802 2 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated split-level bungalow	L 10 Blk. 3, Dove St., Olympia Village, Alijis, Bacolod City	210,500.00
21	365 sq.m. TCT No. T-132021 5 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 1629-A-29 PN&B Subd., Bakyas, Bacolod City	417,000.00
22	420 sq.m. TCT No. T-122807 & T-122808, 3 BR with 2 T&B, Fairly maintained bungalow	L 1614-B-4-B-1 & 3, Medel Subd., Tangub, Bacolod City	631,700.00
23	500 sq.m. TCT No. T-116333 4 BR with 2 T&B, Deteriorated 2-storey res.	L 4-A Blk. 16, Puentebella Subd., Taculing, Bacolod City	515,100.00
24	197 sq.m. TCT No. T-135797 3 BR with 2 T&B, Fairly maintained bungalow	L 14 Blk. 2, Cadena de Amor, Locsin Housing, Airport, Bacolod City	363,800.00
25	398 sq.m. TCT No. T-122801 5 BR with 2 T&B, Fairly maintained split-level bungalow	L 1064-H-2-K, Encarnacion Subd., Bakyas, Bacolod City	402,300.00
26	271 sq.m. TCT No. T-108582 3 BR with 2 T&B, Deteriorated split-level bungalow	L 9 Blk. 7, Ramylu Village, Tangub, Bacolod City	372,300.00
27	300 sq.m. TCT No. T-108084 LOT ONLY	L 1 Blk. 2, Margen Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	264,000.00
28	240 sq.m. TCT NO. T-103696 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 24 Blk. 19, Carlos Jayme Subd., Mansilingan, Bacolod City	285,700.00
29	172 sq.m. TCT No. T-136522 3 BR with 1 T&B, Poorly maintained bungalow	L 10, Jimena Compound, Mansilingan, Bacolod City	317,800.00
30	480 sq.m. TCT No. T-116335 & T-116336, 3 BR with 2 T&B, Deteriorated split-level bungalow	L 7 & 9 Blk. 14, Ramylu Village, Tangub, Bacolod City	571,400.00
31	708 sq.m. TCT No. T-116326 5 BR with 1 T&B, Unsafe for occupancy	L 1496-B-3, Punta Buri, Mandalagan, Bacolod City	744,500.00
32	710 sq.m. TCT No. T-10722 2 BR with 2 T&B, Poorly Maintained bungalow	L 205-B, Plaridel St., Silay City, Negros Occidental	1,093,700.00
33	418 sq.m. TCT No. T-104925 4 BR with 1 T&B, Fairly maintained bungalow	L 11 Blk. 2, Domingo Lizares Lizares St., Zone 1, Talisay City, Negros Occidental	958,200.00
34	600 sq.m. TCT No. T-10664 3 BR with 2 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 18 Blk. 12, Holileña Subd., Silay City, Negros Occidental	542,000.00
35	991 sq.m. TCT No. T-114665 Lot only	L 17 Blk. 13, # 20 Kamonsil St., La Salle Subd., Villamonte, Bacolod City	2,973,000.00
36	420 sq.m. TCT Nos. T-116337 & T-116338, 2 BR with 1 T&B, Fairly maintained bungalow	L 12 & 13 Blk. 9, # 3 Guava Ave. Mansilingan, Bacolod City	590,200.00
37	412 sq.m. TCT No. T-128925 3 BR with 1 T&B, Deteriorated bungalow	L 10 Blk. 6, Gamboa Subd., Talisay City, Negros Occidental	691,300.00

Complete description of the properties including BIDDING FORMS & INSTRUCTION TO BIDDERS are available at the Real Estate – Loans Section, SSS Bacolod Branch Office. Lacson St., Bacolod City. Please contact **RAMONA O. PAROGINOG** at Telephone No. 709-0880 local 203.

Sealed bids should be dropped at the Bid Box located at the Administrative Section (2nd Floor) of SSS Bacolod City Branch from **8:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. on August 24, 2006.** The bids should be labeled **Acquired Assets Disposal Committee, Social Security System.**

Bidder's deposit, equivalent to at least 30% (if bidder is former owner, their spouses, parents and children) or 10% (if bidder does not fall under the preceding category) of the bid price in cash (Philippine money/ U.S. dollar) or in Certified Manager's Check in favor of SSS must be enclosed with the sealed bid. (Any other form or draft purportedly as manner of payment is not acceptable). The bidder must also sign the sealed envelope across its flap. Sealed bid without the bidder's deposit will not be entertained.

The award shall be made to the bidder who made the most advantageous offer to the SSS. As a rule, cash bids shall be preferred over installment bids. An installment bid shall, however, be considered as more advantageous if the installment bid is greater by at least 20% over a cash bid. In case of installment bids, the bid with the shortest payment period shall be preferred unless the difference in the bids is greater by at least 20%, in which case the bid with the longer payment period shall be considered more advantageous to the SSS.

The sale of the properties shall be "As Is, Where Is". The winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of the SSS.

After deducting the bid deposit from the Bid Price, the balance shall be payable either in cash within 30 days or amortized up to a maximum of 120 months at pre-determined interest rate. If bidder opts to amortize, proof of income (ITR, business permit or Certificate of Employment and Compensation) shall be among the documents for submission on bidding date. Upon approval of the sale, the buyer shall issue twelve (12) PDCs covering the first year of amortization and the same number of checks for each succeeding year. Actual expenses or advances made by SSS for foreclosure and consolidation of title shall be added to purchase price of the former owner or his successor-in-interest provided the fair market value is less than the consolidated value of the property.

The system reserves the right to reject any or all bids, or to waive any defect found therein.

All awards shall be subject to the confirmation of the Social Security Commission whose decision shall be final and binding on all concerned.

(Sgd.) **AVP MARIANO PABLO S. TOLENTINO**
Chairperson, Acquired Assets Disposal Committee

(PDI - Aug. 5, 2006)

Trans Co
Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations & Maintenance

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Refurbishment of Corroded Overhead Ground Wire along Kalayaan-Gumaca 230 kV Transmission Line 2 (Phase I)

The proposed project is located in Quezon Province with an estimated length of 20.759 linear kilometers. The work contemplated to be done by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all materials, labors, superintendence, supplies, tools, and equipment and other incidentals necessary for the complete replacement of corroded overhead ground wire including line hardwares in accordance with the requirements of the Plans and Specifications.

[TRANS-06-ROHGWKGP1-EG-17]

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM***, through the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) intends to apply the sum of ***Five Million Nine Hundred Fifty Three Thousand Five Hundred Fifty Seven & 90/100 (Php 5,953,557.90)*** being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *Refurbishment of Corroded Overhead Ground Wire Along Kalayaan-Gumaca 230kV T/L2 (Phase I)*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for the *refurbishment of corroded overhead ground wre along kalayaan-gumaca 230kV T/L 2 (Phase I)*. Bidders should possess a valid ***PCAB license*** with ***License Particular of at least: "Category D & C, Specialties"*** and ***Registration Particular of at least: "Small B-Electrical Works" (Power Transmission & Distribution)***, respectively, have completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid involving supply of materials, labor, tools and equipment including superintendence for the rehabilitation/ replacement/installation/construction of transmission lines rated 69 kV and above. The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: ***August 23, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required by ***60 calendar days.***

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A. 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting ***August 7 - August 18, 2006 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.*** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Php1,000.00***. They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility documents on or before ***August 23, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the stated address. Eligibility Screening shall be held on ***August 23, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** *Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 A.M.*** to ***5:00 P.M.*** on ***September 6-8, 2006.***

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee ***Php 2,000.00***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting ***September 6-8, 2006, 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.***

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on ***September 14, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room Transco, SLOM San Vicente Biñan, Laguna.

Deadline for submission of bids is on ***September 28, 2006, 9:00 A.M.*** at the address below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R.A. 9184. Bid opening shall be on the same date, ***September 28, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the ***OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation - South Luzon Operations & Maintenance Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO), San Vicente Biñan, Laguna 4024
Mr. Ruben G. Castuera – BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4094; 4086, 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) **RUBEN G. CASTUERA**
BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--August 5 & 11, 2006)

Trans Co
Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation
South Luzon Operations & Maintenance

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Refurbishment of Corroded Ground Wire (OHGW) along Calaca-Sta. Rosa 230kV Transmission Line (From BCFTPP Gantry to Tower No. 112)

The proposed project is located in Batangas Province with an estimated length of 39.935 linear kilometers. The work contemplated to be done by the successful bidder shall consist of furnishing all superintendence, labor and materials (excluding Overhead Ground Wire), supplies, tools and equipment and other incidentals necessary for the complete replacement of corroded overhead ground wire including line hardwares in accordance with the requirements of the Plans and Specifications.

[TRANS-06-RCOGWCSR-EG-08-PB2]

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM***, through the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) intends to apply the sum of ***Three Million One Hundred Thousand (Php 3,100,000.00)*** being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *the Refurbishment of Corroded Overhead Ground Wire (OHGW) along Calaca-Sta. Rosa 230kV Transmission Line (From BCFTPP Gantry 1 to Tower No. 112)*. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for the *Refurbishment of Corroded Overhead Ground Wire (OHGW) along Calaca-Sta. Rosa 230kV Transmission (From BCFTPP Gantry to Tower No. 112)*. Bidders should possess a valid ***PCAB license*** with ***License Particular of at least: "Category D & C, Electrical Works"*** and ***Registration Particular of at least: "Small B, Electrical Works (Power Transmission & Distribution)."*** respectively, have completed a single contract similar to the contract to be bid involving experience installation/construction of transmission lines rated to 69 kV and above. The value of which should be at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: ***August 17, 2006, 1:30 P.M.*** at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required by *sixty (60) working days.*

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting ***August 7 - 16, 2006 from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.*** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Php1,000.00***. They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility documents on or before ***August 17, 2006, 1:00 P.M.*** at the stated address. Eligibility Screening shall be held on ***August 17, 2006, 1:30 P.M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** *Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from ***8:00 A.M.*** to ***5:00 P.M.*** on ***August 25-31, 2006.***

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee ***Php 2,000.00***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative starting ***August 25-31, 2006, 8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.***

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on ***September 1, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the OAVP Conference Room Transco, SLOM San Vicente Biñan, Laguna.

Deadline for submission of bids is on ***September 13, 2006, 9:00 A.M.*** at the address below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R.A. 9184. Bid opening shall be on the same date, ***September 13, 2006, 9:30 A.M.*** at the ***OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The ***NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation - South Luzon Operations & Maintenance Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO), San Vicente Biñan, Laguna 4024
Mr. Ruben G. Castuera – BAC Chairman
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4094; 4086, 4053
rgcastuera@transco.ph
(02) 981-4576 to 78 local 4007
www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) **RUBEN G. CASTUERA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI--August 5 & 11, 2006)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Transmission Line Materials
PB060728-LE0108/PR NO. SPL-06-000026735

1. The NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO), through the 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board, intends to apply the sum of ***PhP 7,650,805.92*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***PB060728-LE0108/PR NO. SPL-06-000026735, Supply and Delivery of Transmission Line Materials.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening. Award shall be on a lot basis.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for ***Supply and Delivery of Transmission Line Materials.*** Delivery of the GOODS is required ***within sixty (60) calendar days from the receipt of the approved Purchase Order/Contract.*** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from ***August 07, 2006 to August 25, 2006*** from ***9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.*** and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of ***Php 1,000.00***. The method of payment will be ***CASH***. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The TRANSCO-HO will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 14, 2006/10:00 a.m.*** at the same address below.
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***August 28, 2006/2:00 p.m.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	*One percent (1%) or Php 76,508.06*
2. Bank guarantee	*One and a half percent (1½%) or Php 114,762.09*
3. Surety bond	*Two and a half percent (2½%) or Php 191,270.15*
4. Foreign government guarantee	*One Hundred percent (100%) or Php 7,650,805.92*

7. Bid opening shall be on ***August 28, 2006/2:00 p.m.*** at the *Admin Conference Room, same address below.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, G/F TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Ave. corner BIR Road
Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No.: (632) 981-2205 / (632) 9812241
Fax No. (632) 922-8432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) **ARMANDO N. OCHOA**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - August. 5 & 12, 2005)

PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY

PORT DISTRICT OFFICE OF VISAYAS
CIP COMPLEX, SERGING OSMEÑA BLVD., NORTH RECLAMATION AREA, CEBU CITY, PHILIPPINES
TEL. NO. (032) 232-3401 to 04, FAX NO. (032) 232-1990
Email: pdovisayas@ppavis.com • Website: www.ppavis.com

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PHILIPPINE PORTS AUTHORITY, Port District Office – Visayas**, through its Bids and Awards Committee – Engineering Project (BAC-EP), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

A. Name of Contract : Proposed Extension of RC Pier and Construction of RoRo Ramp
Location : Brgy. Balite, Kawayan, Biliran Province
Required Experience : **1.0 Construction of RC Pier & RoRo Ramp**
RC Pier & RoRo Ramp 378.00 SQ.M.
Driving of RC Piles 1,275.00 LN.M.
(at least 50% of the required quantity)
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : **P13,954,301.52**
Source of Funds : PPA Corporate Funds
Contract Duration : 100 CD
PCAB Registration : Medium "A" for Ports, Harbor & Offshore Engineering

Required Equipments

1.0	1 unit	Crane Barge (DWT-450T)	– Owned/Leased
2.0	1 unit	Truckmounted Crane (35T)	– Owned
3.0	1 unit	Diesel Hammer (3.5T)	– Owned
4.0	1 unit	Drop Hammer (2T)	– Owned
5.0	2 units	One Bagger Concrete Mixer	– Owned
6.0	2 units	Concrete Vibrator	– Owned
7.0	1 unit	Welding Machine	– Owned
8.0	1 unit	Bar Bender	– Owned
9.0	1 unit	Bar Cutter	– Owned
10.0	1 unit	Boom Truck (5t)	– Owned

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB license and registration particulars applicable to the type and cost of the contract to be bid; have key personnel and equipment available for the prosecution of the contract; must have completed *50% for Major Items of Work* (indicated above) on contract/projects with similar in nature and complexity to the contract to be bid within the past *Five (5) years* immediately preceding the publication of this invitation and with Single Largest Project (SLP) value of at least *50% of the approved budget for the contract to be bid*, and meet the other eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Statement. Applications for eligibility, as well as the preliminary examination of bids, will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" criteria. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid. In accordance with the IRR-A of RA 9184, a contract will be awarded only to the lowest calculated and responsive bidder.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	Schedule
1.0 Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	Until August 25, 2006
2.0 Issuance of Eligibility Forms	Until August 25, 2006
3.0 Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	September 4, 2006

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office – Visayas, CIP Complex, Serging Osmeña Blvd., North Reclamation Area, Cebu City upon their submission of a LOI, photocopy of PCAB License and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,120.00 (inclusive of 12% VAT) to the Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office – Visayas Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P3,360.00 (inclusive of VAT) to the Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office – Visayas Cashier.

The Philippine Ports Authority, Port District Office – Visayas reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all bids at any time prior to the award of contract without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **JAMES J. GANTALAO**
BAC Chairman

(PDI-August 5 & 14, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City
Healthline 637-9999 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 2006-004-g

BIDDING FOR THE LEASE OF OFFICE SPACES INTENDED FOR PHILHEALTH NCR-CENTRAL BRANCH OFFICE, SERVICE OFFICE AND OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT FOR NCR GROUP

The **Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth)**, through the Corporate Operating Budget (COB) 2006, intends to apply the sum of **PhP 3,292,800.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Lease of Office Spaces Intended for PhilHealth NCR-Central Branch Office, Service Office and Office of the Vice-President for NCR Group. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

PhilHealth now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the said procurement with the following specifications:

Location

The location of the building should be along Quezon Avenue and near EDSA where it is easily accessible to all PhilHealth clientele, e.g. members, partners and health providers.

Space Requirement

The total space requirement (rentable) is approximately 2,100 square meters.

a. For the space requirement of PhilHealth Membership Assistance Center (PMAC), it must be at least 500 sq. m.
b. It must have at least 30 parking slots for PhilHealth clients and 15 of which are free of charge and reserved for PhilHealth Officers and Employees.

PMAC Location and Space Requirement

The location for PMAC must be situated at the ground floor of the building to be accessible and convenient for the members.

Building (Equipment and Facilities)

The building must be structurally sound as checked by the proper authorities.

The building must have the following equipment/facilities:

- Sub-metering for electrical and water supply;
- Fire protection system such as water sprinklers, smoke detectors and fire alarm system;
- Fire exits;
- Floor ceiling must be at least 2.2 meters in clear height;
- Comfort Rooms in each floor at least one (1) for male and one (1) for females;
- Space for pylon post for vertical signage;
- Standby generator;
- Grounding system;
- Lightning Arrester; and
- Removable/Detachable acoustic ceiling.

I.T. Requirements

The building must have the following:

- Available riser for data cables to pass through from one floor to another;
- Wire ways for network cables going from one room to another;
- At least 2 sq. m. provision for the installation of wireless communication equipment located at the rooftop (free of charge);
- The ceiling must have at least 0.30 meter clear space from the bottom of the beams for the installation of horizontal cabling of data cables;
- PhilHealth should be allowed to demolish portion of walls and floors for the installation of data cables and others; and
- Electrical room for the termination of data voice and electrical cables.

Basic Term

The basic term of the contract shall be for a period of four (4) months, subject for renewal.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino Citizens/Sole Proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws of regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino Citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 and subject to Commonwealth Act 138. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to the technical and financial requirements. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who would be determined as such after the post-qualification procedure.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the **Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees (OSBAC)** in the Central Office of PhilHealth, Room 1107, 11th floor, Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Pasig City, and inspect the Bidding Documents from **8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

A complete set of Bidding Documents should be purchased by interested Bidders from **July 31 to August 14, 2006** at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of **PhP 10,000.00** cash. The prospective Bidder or his authorized representative shall receive the Bidding Documents personally.

PhilHealth will hold a **Pre-Bid Conference** open to all interested parties on **August 15, 2006** at **10:30 a.m.** at the **OSBAC Conference Room** (Rm. 1106), PhilHealth Central Office, 11th floor, Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Blvd., Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the **OSBAC Conference Room** on or before **August 28, 2006, 10:30 a.m.** The official time shall be based on the wall clock located at the **OSBAC Conference Room.** Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be on August 28, 2006, 10:30 a.m. at the **OSBAC Conference Room.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

CY 2004 to CY 2005 is the relevant period for contracts which will be required to be submitted by PhilHealth.

PhilHealth reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Office of the Secretariat for the Bids and Awards Committees in the Central Office
MR. JOSEPH O. VERGARA
Rm. 1107, 11th Floor Citystate Centre
709 Shaw Blvd. Brgy. Oranbo, Pasig City
Tel. (02) 637-9999 locals 1128, 1130 and 1830
e-mail add: osbac@philhealth.gov.ph
Facsimile No. 637-4735
www.philhealth.gov.ph

(Sgd.) ATTY. VALENTIN C. GUANIO
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee for Goods and Services

(PDI--July 29 & Aug. 2 & 5, 2006)

Home Guaranty Corporation

NOTICE OF SALE

Please be informed that the following properties of Home Guaranty Corporation located at BF Martinville, Las Piñas City are being offered for sale on "AS IS WHERE IS" basis.

	PROPERTY/LOCATION	TYPE	LOT AREA	SELLING PRICE	Remarks
1.	Blk. 11 Lot 06 BF Martinville	Lot Only	657 sq. m.	2,890,800.00	illegally occupied
2	Blk. 11 Lot 08 BF Martinville	Lot Only	655 sq. m.	3,602,500.00	vacant
3.	Blk. 11 Lot 05 BF Martinville	Lot Only	652 sq. m.	5,542,000.00	vacant
4.	Blk. 26 Lot 02 BF Martinville	Lot Only	782 sq. m.	4,301,000.00	vacant
5.	Blk. 26 Lot 03 BF Martinville	Lot Only	779 sq. m.	4,284,500.00	vacant
6.	Blk. 27 Lot 01 BF Martinville	Lot Only	542 sq. m.	2,384,800.00	vacant
7.	Blk 27 Lot 03 BF Martinville	Lot Only	420 sq. m.	1,848,000.00	vacant
8.	Blk. 16 Lot 26 BF Martinville	Lot Only	804 sq. m.	4,422,000.00	vacant

For inquiries, please call Gerry F. Munsayac at **8956250** or visit our office at Jade Bldg. No. 335 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

(Sgd.) **RAFAEL DE LOS SANTOS**
OIC-Vice President
Project Management/Acquired Asset Disposition Group

(PDI–August 5, 2006)

PHILIPPINE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS NAVAL LOGISTICS CENTER
Fort San Felipe, Cavite City

01 August 2006

INVITATION TO BID

The Philippine Navy is inviting interested proponents to purchase thru pubic auction on "as is, where is" basis, the following:

Lot	Description	Location	Min Bid Price	Pre-Bid Conference	Deadline of Submission/ Opening of Bids	Price of Application Form
1	Used Oil	Naval Petroleum Depot, Sangley Pt., Cavite City	P118,440.00	9:00 AM August 8, 2006	9:00 AM August 16, 2006	P500.00
2	F/B Calypso	Fort San Felipe, Cavite City	P103,500.00			P500.00

Pre-Bid Conference : Naval Sea Systems Command Conference Room, Fort San Felipe, Cavite City.
Bid Bond : Cash/manager's/cashier's check equivalent to 10% of the offered price.
Requirements for Lots 1 and 2:
a. Business Name
b. Mayor's Permit
Additional requirement for Lot 1: Valid EMB-DENR Accreditation as Treatment Storage and Disposal (TSD) Facility operator (Waste Oil Treaters).
For Inquiry: Contact PN Disposal Committee (PNDC) Secretariat at Tel Nr 431-02-04 Loc 5543.
The PNDC reserves the right to accept or reject any bids, to annul bidding process and to reject bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder/s.

For the CHAIRMAN, PN DISPOSAL COMMITTEE:

(Sgd.) CDR EULOGIO P LUTERIA PN
Secretariat, PNDC

(PDI–August 3, 4 & 5, 2006)

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PASEGURUHAN NG MGA NAGLILINGKOD SA PAMAHALAAN
(GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM)
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila

The GSIS is looking for top caliber professionals to occupy two of its key positions.

Vice President – Physical Resources Office

The successful candidate must:
- ✓ Be a licensed Civil, Electrical or Mechanical Engineer, preferably with a Masteral degree
- ✓ Have at least 5 years managerial experience in building administration and maintenance, procurement and materials management and general services
- ✓ Possess core competencies in the areas of technical or process leadership, multiple team management and communication and relationship management

Manager – Engineering and Maintenance Department

The successful candidate must:
- ✓ Be a licensed Civil, Electrical or Mechanical Engineer, preferably with a Masteral degree
- ✓ Have at least 3 years supervisory experience in building and facilities administration and maintenance
- ✓ Possess core competencies in the areas of project management, team or technical supervision and communication and relationship management

Applicants must be between 35 to 50 years old. Applicants may submit their comprehensive resumes together with latest 2x2 ID picture to:

Ms. Mei G. Flores
Human Resources Manager
Human Resources Planning and Acquisition Department
5/F Core G, GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City 1307

Or you can email it to careers@gsis.gov.ph. Kindly indicate in the subject area the position title applied for.

Department of Environment and Natural Resources
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2/F Engineering Building, MWSS Compound
Katipunan Road, Balara, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. +632 9265233; +632 4333446
Telefax Nos.+632 9265234;+632 4333444

Project	Pasig River Environmental Management and Rehabilitation Sector Development Program (PAREMAR)
Loan No.	Asian Development Bank (ADB) Loan No. 1746-PHI
Description of Works	Construction and Development of (A) Riverbanks Ferry Station in FVR Road, Brgy. Barangka,Riverbanks, Marikina City and (B) Construction and Development of Sta. Elena Ferry Station in Marikina Riverpark, Brgy. Sta. Elena, Marikina City.

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a loan from the ADB toward the cost of PAREMAR and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds, to payments under the Contract for the (A) Construction and Development of Riverbanks Ferry Station in FVR Road, Brgy. Barangka, Riverbanks, Marikina City and (B) Construction and Development of Sta. Elena Ferry Station in Marikina Riverpark, Brgy. Sta. Elena, Marikina City.
2. The Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission (PRRC) as the executing agency now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the following contract packages:

Contract Package	A. Construction and Development of Riverbanks Ferry Station	B. Construction and Development of Sta. Elena Ferry Station
Contract No.	EPA-LPP-037	EPA-LPP-038
Location	FVR Road, Brgy. Barangka, Riverbanks, Marikina City	Marikina Riverpark, Brgy. Sta. Elena, Marikina City.
Contract Duration	180 Calendar Days	180 Calendar Days
Project Description	Construction and Development of a Ferry Station, which includes the following items of work: General Requirements, Siteworks / Earthworks, Civil Works; Steel Works; Roofing Works; Ceiling Works; Architectural; Sanitary/ Plumbing Works; Electrical Works; Pontoon Works; Handicap Lift and Geotechnical Survey.	Construction and Development of a Ferry Station, which includes the following items of work: General Requirements, Siteworks / Earthworks, Civil Works; Steel Works; Roofing Works; Ceiling Works; Architectural; Sanitary/ Plumbing Works; Electrical Works; Pontoon Works; Handicap Lift and Geotechnical Survey

3. Interested Bidders shall secure the Bid Documents and submit bids as follows:

Activity		Date	Time	Venue
Securing of (a) Eligibility Checklist or (b) submission of Letter of Intent and purchase of complete set of Bid Documents upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 12,500.00		July 31 – August 11 2006	9:00AM to 3:00 PM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Securing of additional eligibility information (if any) and inspection of Bidding Documents.		July 31 – August 11, 2006	9:00AM to 3:00 PM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Pre-Bid Conference	Contract Package A	August 15, 2006	2:00 PM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
	Contract Package B			
Site Inspection	Contract Package A	August 15, 2006	10:00 AM	FVR Road, Brgy. Barangka, Riverbanks, Marikina City
	Contract Package B	August 15, 2006	10:00 AM	Marikina Riverpark, Brgy. Sta. Elena, Marikina City.
Deadline for Submission of Bids	Contract Package A	August 29, 2006	9:00 AM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
	Contract Package B	August 29, 2006	1:00 PM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Opening of Bids.	Contract Package A	August 29, 2006	9:30 AM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
	Contract Package B	August 29, 2006	1:30 PM	PRRC, 2F, MWSS, Eng'g. Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105

4. The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) and the City of Marikina shall be the implementing agencies of the Project.
5. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in "Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans".
6. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the Instructions to Bidders.
7. The Bids and Awards Committee (BAC) reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at anytime prior to Contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) BINGLE H.B. GUTIERREZ
Executive Director
Pasig River Rehabilitation Commission
2F, MWSS Engineering Bldg. Katipunan Road, Old Balara, Quezon City 1105
Tel. Nos. 433-3447 and 926-5234
Email Address: prrc@trl-isys.com
Fax No. 926-5234

(PDI – July 29 & August 5, 2006)

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NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

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with address at
Unit 302 Bel-Air Apartment,
1020 Roxas Blvd. cor. Kalaw Avenue,
Ermita, Manila
represented herein by its

President
YOLANDA D. ROBINSON

is still undergoing application for license to operate a recruitment agency with the **Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)**

(PDI – August 5, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION/SMDP

The **NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA)** wishes to announce to all interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction/SMDP of 49,950 MT or 999,000 bags More or Less 15% brokens imported Thailand Rice 2006 Arrivals:

PARTICULARS	VOLUME MT	INDICATIVE PRICE
Farmer's Organizations	10,000	P1,050.00/bag
Retailers	10,000	
Open to all interested Buyers	29,950	

The pre-Auction/SMDP conference and Auction/SMDP proper shall be conducted simultaneously in Manila, Cebu City and Davao City at 10:00 a.m. on the following dates and venues until the stocks are sold:

Venue	Contact Person	Pre-Auction Conference	Auction Proper
NFA Cebu Office Gov. M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad, Cebu City	Mr. Raul Chong Tel. No.: (032) 232-1939 (032) 232-6832	Aug. 8, 2006 Aug. 15, 2006	Aug. 10, 2006 Aug. 17, 2006
NFA Davao Office Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City	Ms. Dianne Silva Tel. No.: (083) 554-3200 (082) 227-4166	Aug. 8, 2006 Aug. 15, 2006	Aug. 10, 2006 Aug. 17, 2006
FDC, FTI Compound Taguig, Metro Manila	Atty. Basildes Taco Tel. No.: (02) 563-9437 (02) 563-9451	Aug. 8, 2006 Aug. 15, 2006	Aug. 10, 2006 Aug. 17, 2006
	Mr. Ruben Reside Tel. No.: (044) 463-1168 (044) 463-1233		
	Ms. Espie Tecson Tel. No.: (02) 426-0569		

All interested bidders/buyers are required to submit the following documents:

a. Original and xerox copy of NFA license (retailing, wholesaling and/or milling)
b. In case of representative, a duly notarized authorization from the owner, partner, chairman or president that he or she is authorized to represent the business entity in the pre-Auction/SMDP and Auction/SMDP proper and all activities thereto.
c. Offer must be accompanied by Bid Bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Cashier's or Manager's check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank.

Interested bidders for Metro Manila may secure the Terms and Conditions starting **August 8, 2006** at NFA Central Office located at Philippine Sugar Center Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. For any inquiries, interested bidders may call the above-mentioned contact persons.

Bid documents will be available during the pre-SMDP conference to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 for FO's/retailers and P2,000.00 for other interested bidders (wholesalers/millers).

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) **CONRADO DL. IBAÑEZ**
Assistant Administrator and
Concurrent Director, DMO

(PDI - Aug. 4 & 5, 2005)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Manila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective consultants to apply for eligibility and shortlisting and if found eligible and short-listed, to bid for the Conduct of Consumer Expectations Survey (CES) for one (1) Quarter, per BSP Terms of Reference.

The Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for this consultancy services is P3 Million.

The scope of the work includes, among others, the conduct of one (1) quarter survey which would cover all 17 regions in the country including ARMM, if possible. Each major area (NCR and outside NCR) shall have a sample size of about 2,500 households or a total of 5,000 samples nationwide. The consultant's responsibilities shall include: a) survey design; b) conduct of survey (e.g., survey enumeration / data collection, field supervision, field editing, and call backs; and c) data encoding and processing as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The list of minimum eligibility requirements is indicated in the Eligibility Form. Eligibility of prospective consultants shall be checked using a non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Interested consultants must meet the following criteria:

1.0 The prospective consultants must have a minimum of two (2) years experience in the conduct of nationwide surveys.
2.0 The prospective consultants must have a minimum of five (5) computers that can be used for data encoding purposes.
3.0 The prospective consultants must have at least five (5) technical staff each with at least two (2) years experience in the conduct of surveys. The Permanent Survey Director / Manager to be assigned to this project must be at least a degree holder.
4.0 The prospective consultants must have a bank deposit of at least one million pesos.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas shall evaluate bids using the Quality-Cost Based Approach procedure through a weighted scoring system that simultaneously considers both the overall technical quality of the proposal and the financial bid (60-40). The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instructions to Bidders.

The complete schedule of activities for shortlisting is listed as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Eligibility Requirements	4 August – 24 August 2006, up to 2:00 PM
2. Pre-Bid Conference	25 August 2006, 3:00 PM
3. Submission / Opening of Eligibility Requirements	8 September 2006, 9:30 AM

The list of eligibility requirements may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat upon submission of a ***letter of intent*** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P 500.00.**

Bid documents will be available only to short-listed bidders (top 5 shall be considered) upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **P 1,500.00** to the BSP Cashier.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract shall apply.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate / indemnify the consultant for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI – August 5, 2006)

IMMIGRATION AUSTRALIA
ELPIDIO JNR. BAUTISTA
Registered Migration Agent-
MARN 0002606
Tel. No. (02) 931-4046
or (02) 951-0180
Cell Phone – 0915-4013817
Email: elpidioj@tpg.com.au

R.A. 9048 Form 8.1
Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province: Misamis Oriental
Municipality: NAAWAN

NOTICE OF POSTING

The public is hereby notified that Jocelyn Nera Gorospe has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from "Joseline-Ofelia" to "JOCELYN" in the certificate of live birth of Joseline-Ofelia N. Nera bearing Registry Number 2351.

Any person having knowledge and/or claiming interest or may be adversely affected by said petition may, within ten (10) calendar days, file his/her written opposition with this Office.

Date: 25th of July 2006

(Sgd.) ANN R. DADOLE
Municipal Civil Registrar

(PDI–Aug. 5 & 12, 2006)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
722-1144
722-1155

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
PNOC
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

10 pcs. of ¼" x 2500# Solenoid Valves under FGJ 61054
Approved Budget: PHP 2,800,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **August 7, 2006** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **August 14, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time)** of **August 28, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee II

(PDI--August 5 & 12, 2006)

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ANNOUNCEMENT

The **Local Government Unit Management Training Project (LGUMTP)**

a joint project of the
National Economic and Development Authority-Caraga
and the
New Zealand Agency for International Development

is in search for

Case Study Researchers / Writers

with extensive experience in project / program development and management work (not less than six years), at least 3 years of which with local government units

with very good technical writing and communication skills

Working closely with the LGUMTP Project Director, the Case Study Researcher / Writer shall:

- *Identify at least three possible benchmark cases*
- *Develop methodology for research and write-up of a selected case*
- *Conduct research, collect materials, interview key informants, document and write-up a selected case*
- *Write-up the benchmark case (for minimum 5 pages, maximum 10 pages) for use in LGUMTP Training and for use by other stakeholders in Project / Program Development and Management*

To submit: *Curriculum Vitaé*, Letter of Intent, Sample of written work (preferably published case studies on LGU projects), Brief proposed methodology for research / write-up of LGU benchmark cases.

Send to: **The Project Director**
Local Government Unit Management Training Project
c/o NEDA Caraga Regional Office
Nimfa Tiu Building, J. Rosales Avenue, Butuan City
TeleFax Nos. (085) 3420181
E-mail Address: **nzaidlgumtp_neda@yahoo.com**

Deadline of Submission: Monday, 21 August 2006

OBITUARIES

In loving memory of

Rosa Maria "Bambi" Vergara-Falgui

(May 10, 1962 – August 2, 2006)

Her loving husband, **Tomas**; children: **Maki, Neil, Pandit, Tomy**; mother, **Francis** and father **Dô** (†); siblings: **Bernie** & **Camille, Ria** & **Jay, Rica** & **Ernest, Gigi** & **Ramy**; nieces and nephews: **Diego, Bianca, Jake, Gaea, Max, Gracie, Alfie**, and **Ginnie**.

In-laws, **Papa Kune** & **Mama Minda**; sister, **Tess**; nephews: **Philip, Paolo, Percy**, and **Pedro** (†).

Request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at their residence in General Santos City.

Interment will be on Sunday, August 6, 2006 after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

The Assumption batch '79 and the Vergara family will offer a special Mass on August 11, 2006 on the 9th day of prayers at 7:00 p.m., Sanctuario de San Antonio Parish Center, Forbes Park, Makati.

We invite her Ateneo College batch '83 and her Ateneo Law School batch '87.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND
MANAGEMENT OF THE

MURCIA AGRICULTURAL INDUSTRIAL CORP.

Deeply regret to announce the demise of its PRESIDENT

DR. HORACIO ESTRADA Y REYNADO

October 5, 1924 - August 1, 2006
PROFESSOR EMERITUS
U.P. College of Medicine

"We know that God raised the Lord Jesus from death.
He will raise us to life with Jesus.
He will present us, along with you, to God"
2 Corinthians 4:14

Artemio Guyala Gersalia, Sr.

"TEMYONG"

of Bulan, Sorsogon

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on August 4, 2006 at the age of 70.

His bereaved wife Gloria Corro;
children Dhel & Nonoy Mendoza, Artemio "Jhon" Gersalia, Jr.;
grandchildren Luis Antonio & Bianca Katrina,
relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray
for the eternal repose of his soul.

His cremated remains lie in state at the
St. Joseph Chapel, 888 Homes, North Fairview, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

HORACIO "ACE" ALLEGADO MORENO

Peacefully joined our Creator
on July 21, 2006, at the age of 55.

His bereaved mother, **Filomena**, together with his siblings **Alicia & Eleuterio Neri, Carmen & Jose Marie Trillo, Alicia & Rodolfo Romerica, Nestor** and **Pedencio & Marge**, nephews, nieces and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Moreno's Residence L.M. Seriña & Madroño Sts., Brgy. 5, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental.

Interment will be today, August 5, 2006, at the St. Rita's Parish Cemetery after the 3:00 PM Mass and necrological services at the St. Rita's Parish Church, Balingasag, Misamis Oriental.

With our storehouse of
memories we cherish him
and let our prayers guide us to our
place of comfort and strength
With love, hope and thanksgiving
We, the family of the late

Adrian V. Ocampo

commemorate the **1st** year of his passing
on **August 5, 2005** and request
the faithful to join us in prayer for the
eternal repose of his soul.

"I love you, O Lord my strength
O Lord, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer."
Psalm 18: 2 -3

To every thing, there is a season and a time to
every purpose under heaven...
A time to live, a time to die... A time to heal, a
time to weep, and a time to laugh...
A time to mourn and a time to love...
Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

Dr. Jose S. Ramirez

died peacefully at his home
on 3 August 2006 after a difficult battle with cancer.
He was 76.

Chairman, Board of Medical Examiners;
Dean, UERM College of Medicine;
President, Association of Philippine Medical Colleges;
Regent, Philippine College of Surgeons;
Founding Member & *Chair* of the Philippine Board of Surgery;
President, Philippine Chapter, American College of Surgeons
and others.

Joeram is survived by his wife, **Dr. Gloria Ramirez**, his children **Joey, Eric, Bianca, Emil** and **David** and their spouses respectively **Anne, Pam, Gunther, Suzanne,** and **Lisa,** and their grandchildren, **Nicco, Iain, Jason, Miguel** and **Justin.**

A celebration of **Joeram**'s life with Memorial Prayers will be held on August 9, Wednesday, 6:30 PM at the Ramirez residence on Commonwealth Ave. Family members, colleagues and friends are invited. Please contact Collie 715-1759, or Pam 0917-837-8528 or Eric 0917-530-5944 . Novena prayers on August 5 & 6 (Saturday & Sunday) at 5 pm, and at 6:30 pm from August 7 through 11. Other visitation times 10 am to 9 pm from August 5 to August 11.

Dearest dad, farewell... we will love you always
and we will never forget you.

People, Events & Products

Jus' 4 Kids Discovery Tour

JUS' 4 KIDS, THE NUTRITIOUS NATURAL FRUIT juice highly recommended to enhance the physical and mental growth of children is holding a Discovery Tour in three Manila Malls – The Alabang Town Center (Aug. 6), Shangri-La Plaza (Aug. 12-13) and Glorietta Mall (Aug. 20). Parents can bring their children to these malls on the designated dates so their kids have a day of adventure, games, prizes and surprises. The children who attend the Discovery Tour can also get to taste both the orange and mango flavors of Jus' 4 Kids. There will be games and activities for the whole family. A healthy beverage, Jus' 4 Kids is a delicious source of vitamins and minerals and it supports the Department of Health's (DOH) food fortification program. A breakthrough formula, it satisfies the necessary nutrients generally lacking in the Filipino child's diet. It contains Vitamins A, C, E, Zinc and Iodine to strengthen the immune system. In addition, the Orange flavor called ZZOOOM! Growth Enhancer contains CGF or Chlorella Growth Factor for growth while the Mango flavor called I.Q. TONIC Brain Booster contains Taurine which promotes brain cell development. It has the Sangkap Pinoy Seal which means that it has the recognition of the Department of Health (DOH) and the Bureau of Food and Drugs as it is a product fortified with Vitamins A, Iodine or Iron or a combination of these micronutrients. Jus' 4 Kids is now available in leading supermarkets nationwide.

Jazz Memories Live at Rockwell

JAZZ FANS EAGER TO RE-LIVE THE GREAT days of jazz in Manila will have a chance to do so at Teak Bistro at the Power Plant Mall in Makati's Rockwell Center on Aug. 9. 92.3 JOEY said "On stage will be Henry Katindig and Friends, playing cool delightful tunes such as Ronnie Laws' "Night Breeze", Deodato's "Love Island", and George Benson's "Breezin'" for starters. These were some of the favorites at Birds of the Same Feather, the jazz joint of the late 70's and 80's, now closed, at Timog Avenue in Quezon City. The band will primarily play jazz fusion, pop and latin jazz tunes. Henry Katindig, a keyboard wizard, is a second generation jazz artist. He is the son of Eddie Katindig, the much-admired jazz sax player. Katindig's four friends are all veteran and well-traveled musicians, playing the Asian circuit that includes Tokyo, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taipeh and Singapore. Jenny Tiongco is the quintet's featured singer. Tiongco, like Katindig, comes from a family of well-known musicians. The band will play two sets starting at 6:30 p.m. Always available for the fans' taste buds is Teak Bistro's new Filipino-international menu created by master chef Ed Quimson. Teak Bistro also has good selection of fine wines from Europe, the Americas, Australia and South Africa .

Once a month medication against osteoporosis

Roche Philippines, one of the country's leading pharmaceutical and diagnostics healthcare companies, helps these women prevent and mange osteoporosis with BonDiva, and exclusive patient support program designed to help osteoporosis patients live life to the fullest. The BonDiva program educates and informs women about their condition through medical updates from Roche on bone health wellness and osteoporosis, as well as sending there women invitations to special events and workshops. The campaign was launched in a show hosted by TV personality Ces Drilon held recently at the Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental. The talk show focused on information dissemination about bone health, how to prevent osteoporosis, and what can be done to maintain a healthy bone. Also present was Warwick Bedwell, general manager of Roche (Philippines) Inc. Dr. Zaida Gamilla, Dr. Julie Li-Yu, and Dr. Sandra Torres enlightened guests about frequently asked questions as well as giving new information on bone health. Roche introduces the once-a-month medication that will help strengthen all the bones in the body. In studies in clinical trials involving 12,000 patients, Roche Ibandronic acid, is indicated for the treatment of osteoporosis in postmenopausal women and works by reducing elevated bone turnover, increasing bone mineral density and reducing the incidence of vertebral fractures.

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"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

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BUSINESS

Oil drops as storm weakens, eyes US rates

Prices stay above $75 on potential supply disruptions

SINGAPORE—OIL EDGED DOWN on Friday as fears dissipated over a storm in the Gulf of Mexico, though prices stayed above $75 a barrel on the potential for supply disruptions in the Middle East.

US light crude for September delivery eased 19 cents to $75.27 a barrel by yesterday afternoon, extending Thursday's 35-cent loss.

London ICE Brent crude shed 8 cents to $76.48 a barrel.

Prices eased after Tropical Storm Chris weakened on Thursday and was unlikely to become a hurricane that could threaten US oil and gas production in the Gulf of Mexico, the Miami-based National Hurricane Center said.

"Oil prices are now likely to remain mid-70 something for now," said Tobin Gorey of the Commonwealth Bank of Australia.

Another noted US hurricane research team has reduced its Atlantic storm forecast from nine to seven hurricanes, with only three being described as "intense," down from five in the earlier forecast.

The revised forecast, by the Colorado State University team in its August report, was due to a cooler tropical Atlantic Ocean and a warming eastern Pacific.

Hurricanes last year shut in a quarter of US crude and fuel output and sent oil to then-record highs. Around 12 percent of the 1.5 million barrel-per-day (bpd) of US oil output in the Gulf of Mexico remain offline.

However, analysts are generally bullish over the rest of the third quarter, citing the volatile situation in Lebanon and Iran, as well as expectations that the United States is unlikely to raise interest rates ahead of a review on employment data by the Federal Reserve.

The US economy appears to be decelerating as business activity in the services sector in July and new orders at American factories were unexpectedly weak, according to reports.

Federal Reserve policy makers are expected to weigh these reports and the July employment data on Friday before making a decision on interest rates when they meet on Tuesday.

In the Middle East, Israeli warplanes pounded Beirut in what it said were offices belonging to the militant group Hezbollah as both sides threatened to escalate the war, even as world powers struggled to agree on a UN resolution for a ceasefire.

An Iranian official warned oil prices could hit $200 if international sanctions were imposed on his country in its nuclear dispute with the West.

Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude exporter, believes oil should not be used as a weapon. *Reuters*

A MAN walks past a SingTel retail shop in Singapore. Singapore Telecommunications, Southeast Asia's largest phone firm, beat market expectations with a 10 percent rise in quarterly profit as strong Asian mobile growth outweighed a margin squeeze at its Australian unit. REUTERS

More Asian voting power in IMF urged

TOKYO—JAPANESE FINANCE MINister Sadakazu Tanigaki reiterated calls on Friday to give Asian emerging economies more voting power in the International Monetary Fund to reflect their growing role in the global economy.

He added that giving them more say in the Washington-based institution would help narrow the psychological distance between the fund and Asian countries, whose relations soured during the 1997/98 Asian financial crisis.

Reviewing the allocation of the IMF quota, which determines a member country's voting power and the amount of financing a member can obtain from the IMF, is one of the key pillars in the IMF's medium-term strategy to reform itself.

For nearly a decade, Tokyo has been calling for a review of the fund's voting structure, saying Asian countries are under-represented in the IMF.

"If we don't appropriately reflect voices of those under-represented countries whose economies are developing quickly, we cannot maintain the legitimacy and credibility of the IMF," Tanigaki told a news conference.

Tanigaki added that he discussed the review of the quota allocations and other IMF reform agenda with visiting IMF Managing Director Rodrigo Rato in Tokyo on Wednesday.

"When Rato became the managing director, I told him that the psychological distance between Asia and the IMF has widened since the Asian financial crisis and I asked him to make efforts to narrow that," Tanigaki said. "So, we need to fix the problem."

Some in Asian nations still have bitter memories of the IMF's reform proposals during the Asian financial turmoil, which critics said dragged their economies deeper into trouble.

Speaking in Tokyo on Thursday, Rato said he expected some key decisions on the issue to come out of the IMF's annual meeting in Singapore in mid-September.

Immediate action would include increasing quotas for a few countries whose quotas are most clearly out of line with their weight in the global economy, Rato said.

An IMF proposal already circulated among members would give ad hoc increases to a small number of countries like China, South Korea, Mexico, and Turkey.

But tensions remain between industrial and developing countries over how to reallocate voting power beyond initial increases in the quotas for some emerging nations. *Reuters*

Southeast Asia marts up

SINGAPORE—MOST SOUTHeast Asian stock markets rose on Friday as concerns about higher interest rates eased.

By midday, Singapore's Straits Times Index inched up 0.07 percent, Philippine stocks rose 0.21 percent, Indonesian stocks climbed 0.31 percent, and the Malaysian stock index were up 0.29 percent.

Thai shares bucked the regional trend, falling 0.24 percent yesterday afternoon.

Looking ahead, fund managers said regional markets may trade in a range until the end of August—despite their gains in the past two weeks—due to concerns about higher oil prices and tensions in the Middle East.

"Markets in the region have jumped in the last few weeks but I don't think they are going to rally from here," said Amy Low, vice president of fund management at Deutsche Asset Management.

In Manila, Central Bank Governor Amando Tetangco said on Friday that interest rates may be left unchanged in the short term on easing inflation.

Data on Friday showed Philippine consumer prices rose 6.4 percent in July from a year earlier, the slowest climb in two years, due to lower inflation in services, food, beverages and tobacco.

Analysts said that steady interest rates could help push the index above its near-seven-year high level struck on May 8.

The Philippine market has gained nearly 7 percent in the last three weeks, and is now about 9 percent below its May 8 high.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the country's largest telecoms firm, rose 1.5 percent, while Globe Telecom Inc, the second-largest phone firm, rose 1 percent.

In Jakarta, stocks jumped on persistent investor hopes that easing inflation pressures will prompt the central bank to cut rates by as much as 50 basis points next week.

Astra International, Indonesia's largest automotive distributor, rose 3.4 percent.

PT Bank Mandiri Tbk , Indonesia's largest lender, jumped 3.2 percent, while Telkom Indonesia, the country's largest telecoms firm, rose 0.6 percent.

Blue chips led gains in Singapore. DBS Group, Southeast Asia's largest bank, rose 1.1 percent.

Singapore Airlines—the world's second-biggest airline by stock market value—gained 1.5 percent.

The airline said after the market closed on Thursday that it would raise its fuel surcharge on flights between Singapore and North America due to soaring jet fuel prices. *Reuters*

Toyota Q1 profit jumps

TOKYO—TOYOTA MOTOR Corp., the world's most profitable car maker, posted a better-than-expected 26.5 percent rise in quarterly operating profit as sales charged ahead in North America and Europe, and kept its forecast for another year of record earnings.

Toyota, whose market value of $188 billion is nearly treble the combined worth of Detroit's big three auto makers, is relentlessly winning drivers around the world with its fuel-efficient cars, and should soon overtake General Motors Corp. as the world's biggest car maker by sales volume.

April-June operating profit at Japan's top auto maker was 512.42 billion yen ($4.45 billion), versus 405.13 billion yen a year earlier, beating a mean estimate of 493.4 billion yen from eight brokerages compiled by Reuters Estimates.

"These are extremely good earnings," said Koji Endo, a Credit Suisse auto analyst. "The yen weakened and the company had considerable sales growth, especially in North America and in Asia."

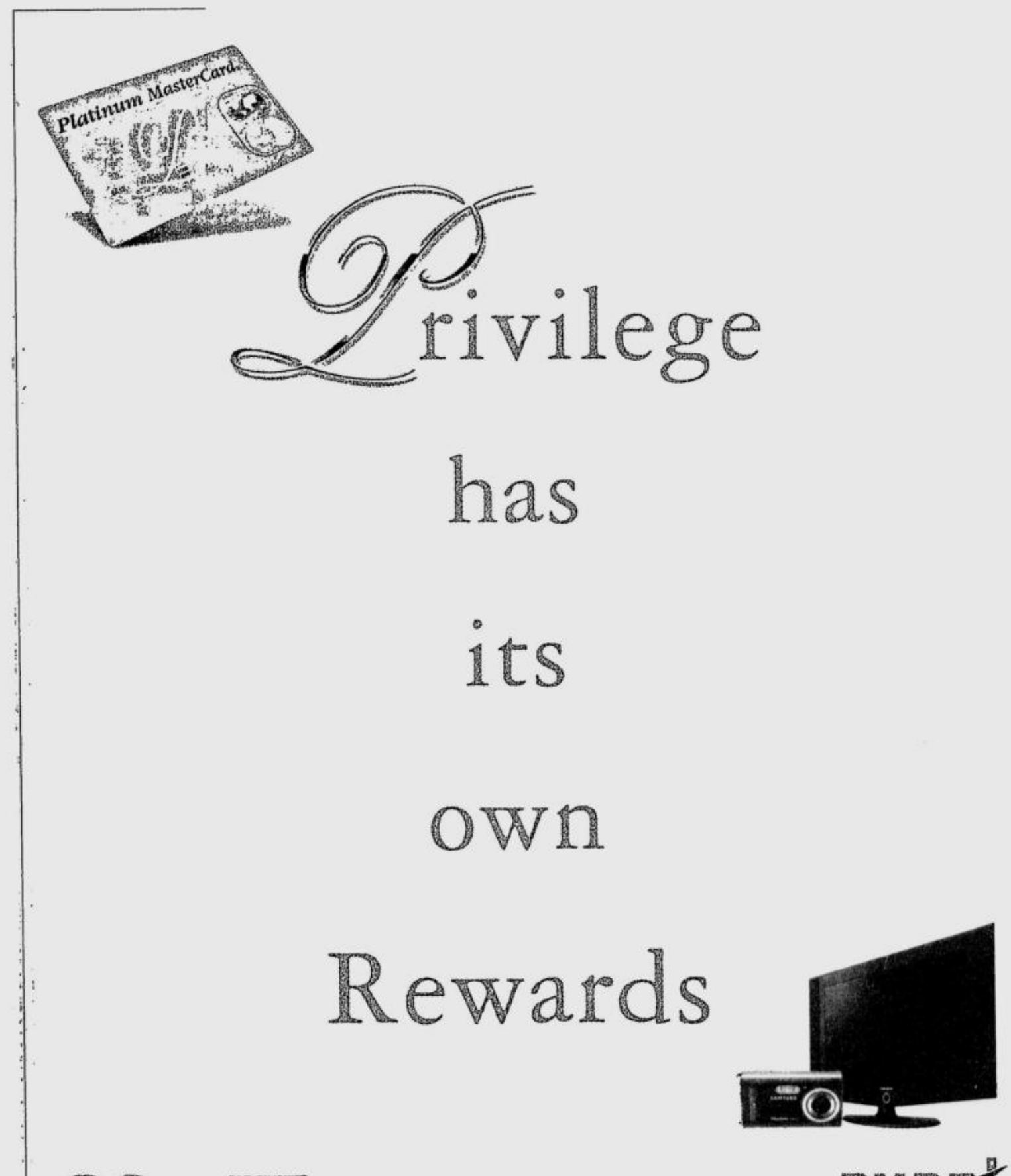
With gasoline prices near record highs, demand in the United States, the world's biggest car market, has been concentrated on Toyota and rival Honda Motor Co.

Both brands marked milestones in July, with Toyota selling more cars in the United States than Ford Motor Co., and Honda outselling DaimlerChrysler AG's Chrysler arm.

In an overall US market that shrank 14 percent last month, Toyota increased its sales by 16 percent, giving it a best-ever share of 16.4 percent—beating Ford's 15.3 percent and well above Chrysler's 10.2 percent, data showed this week.

"Toyota's strength is that as gasoline prices have risen, it has been able to take advantage of that by selling fuel-efficient cars in the United States," said Koichi Ogawa, chief portfolio manager at Daiwa SB Investments. "It is likely to stay in its leading position."

Net profit grew 39.2 percent in the quarter to 371.50 billion yen. *Reuters*



PROPERTY

Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

Property values near GK communities rise

GK VILLAGE BY THE PASIG RIVER. A community in Buayang Bato, Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, known as GK Concepcion Village, was built with the help of more than 100 corporate partners.

By Tessa R. Salazar

REPLACE AN AREA OF mendicancy into an area of productivity, and what do you get?

Gawad Kalinga supporters and beneficiaries may know the answer. They have observed that wherever Gawad Kalinga works its ways, the property values around it increase. It seems GK projects reverse the many adverse consequences socioeconomic depression has caused many slum communities in the country, primarily on land values.

Though no real estate analyst has confirmed this yet, GK supporters are steadfast in their observation that the increase in land values has been a natural consequence for some time now.

"The rise of the real estate values is not the (original) intention of Gawad Kalinga, but in doing its objective—which is to make what used to be ugly to become beautiful, what used to be dangerous to become peaceful, what used to be troubled communities become productive and friendly—the first obstacles were eliminated," says Jose Ma. Montelibano, a GK volunteer and head of special projects.

GK housing development programs have built more than 20,000 homes nationwide, while 1,000 to 2,000 homes are in the process of being built.

The "GK 777" stands for the group's timetable of 700,000 homes in 7,000 communities in seven years. As Montelibano reminisces, GK technically became public in October 2003.

Doubling its efforts

The group hopes to finish between 5,000 and 10,000 more houses by end 2006 as it doubles its efforts to reach the target.

Montelibano added that property values are not just based on infrastructure or esthetics but also on the improvement of peace and order. "That's why property values along slum areas get pushed down even further because of not only the unsightliness of the houses but also of the peace and order situation of the area," he added.

GK organizers are preparing its third anniversary on Oct. 6, 7 and 8 to showcase 12 simulated villages ranging from an international community to Chinoy villages with five structures of each kind showcasing diversity. From the Philippines, GK found its way to Cambodia, Indonesia, India and Papua New Guinea.

A tent city will be built for the thousands expected to flock from Visayas and Mindanao and farther reaches of Luzon. Theaters of workshop areas, best practices, different programs of GK shelters, environment, health system, productivity and child-youth development (education) projects will be showcased.

Montelibano disclosed GK organizers are negotiating with the SM Management to make SM Mall of Asia the event venue.

Land value appreciation

Architect Jess Casus, a supporter of GK, cited how some areas in Payatas and around the dumpsite where GK has put up several communities improved its property values.

"The surrounding communities are now enjoying an appreciation of property values. The stench of the dumpsite has receded. The government leveled the dumpsite from a 10-story mound to a grassy field that could even pass for a golf course," he said.

Casus added that the waste has been recycled, and methane gas from the waste has even produced power used by the community.

"When Gawad Kalinga came into Payatas, they went into the heart and reformed it despite all of the problems inherent in a dumpsite," Casus said.

"There hasn't been an instance when the land values beside a GK community didn't rise," said Montelibano.

Rise in rural areas

Montelibano also observed that in rural areas, the rise of land values where GK builds is even more dramatic.

"Property values in rural areas are normally 'asleep' because there are no (economic) activities in the town," said Montelibano. In many instances, the GK village being built in a rural area is the first such subdivision built.

Montelibano recalls four small towns in upper Isabela where there were no subdivisions, until the GK villages were built. The same observations could be said in GK villages in 15 towns in the Camarines provinces and in Mindoro.

Better way of giving

The GK program is also moving the mindset of individuals at the other end of the economic spectrum. Take, for example, Antonio Del Rosario, president of TransAsia, a Phinma company, and his wife Aida, who have been involved in a program helping promote a GK village near the creekside area that had become a dumpsite in Multinational Village in Parañaque, a fairly well-developed residential community.

Del Rosario has been interacting with around 118 poor families who have built shanties in the area, in an attempt to gradually integrate a GK community there.

"Anytime shacks are being replaced by livable units, I would expect that the whole surrounding area (in due course) will be upgraded because you now have a community that is being integrated into a better way of living," he said.

And, for Del Rosario, it's a better way of giving.

Makati's fast-paced, ruthless lifestyle can be dull drudgery for any mover and shaker. A working day can leave you stripped of your intensity and passion for living, resigning you to a life of tedium without the energy to reap your successes.

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For announcement purposes only.

MACTAN TOWER at BAY GARDEN

FEDERALAND

The greenest, most energy-efficient buildings in Asean for 2006

(First of two parts)

ENERGY CONSERVATION IS MAKING do with less, while energy efficiency is doing more with less. It means getting the same energy services while using less energy. This is a timely reminder because financial forecasting today is all about the price of oil.

GREEN ARCHITRENDS

Amado de Jesus

The objective of the Asean Energy Awards running annually from 2000 to 2009 is to award the top winning entries in the Asean Energy Efficiency and Conservation Best Practices Competition for Energy-Efficient Buildings. Competing buildings in the region are prequalified by the Department of Energy in the respective 10-member countries of Asean. Winners are chosen by a board of judges composed of one member per Asean country. Judging this year was done in Laos in late May, and awarding of winners also in Laos was done end of July.

Categories

The four categories in the competition are:

- New and Existing Building
- Retrofitted Building
- Tropical Building
- Special Submission

New and existing buildings must not be more than five years old. Retrofitted buildings are more than five years old and have undergone major changes to improve energy efficiency.

Tropical buildings are not more than 15 years old, over 500 square meters in gross floor area, with highly effective passive design resulting in less than 50 percent need for airconditioning. Special submissions are special projects that study, apply and/or develop innovative use of technologies (including R & D projects) applied to reduce energy consumption in buildings. The aim is to promote the development of innovative energy efficiency-related solutions.

Qualified for competition

Offices, schools, libraries, retail/shopping malls, hotels and hospitals have been selected as building types due to their predictable hours of operation.

Prequalification requirements

Candidates should maintain minimum energy-efficiency standards set and established by the Asean board of judges. The energy audit conducted by the Department of Energy at no cost to the applicant is a basic requirement to record energy efficiency and conservation measures employed, and to determine their effectiveness.

Purpose of the competition

The competition aims to provide international prominence and recognition to outstanding companies and individuals who consciously apply the concepts, systems and technologies of energy efficiency and conservation. This is a recognition program for energy-efficient buildings to become showcases for others to replicate and promote energy management programs in the building sector.

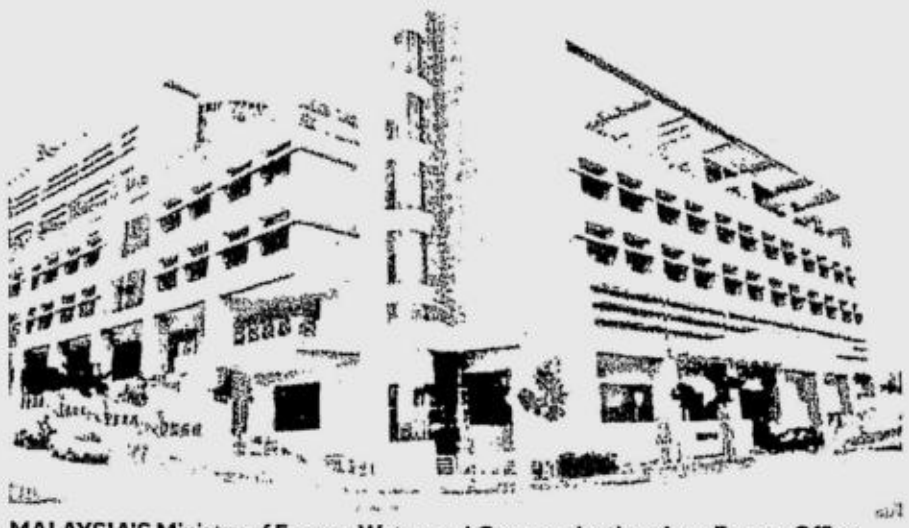
Criteria for judging

Three of many important criteria used for judging include the following:

1. Overall thermal transfer value or OTTV is the measure of heat penetration into the building envelope. The acceptable OTTV is below 45 watts per square meter (watts/sq m). Winners in the new and existing building category had OTTV readings from 23 w/sq m to 32 w/sq m.

2. Lighting load is the amount of energy needed to illuminate the building. For offices, the maximum acceptable index is 15 w/sq m of gross floor area; for others like hospitals it is 25 w/sq m. The winners in the new and existing building category are office buildings with lighting load of 2.64 w/sq m for the winner, and 10 to 10.58 w/sq m for the runner-ups.

3. Energy-efficiency index based on occupied air-conditioned areas has a standard of 200 kilowatt hours per square meter per year (kWh/sq m/year) for offices, 240 kWh/sq m/year, for retail/shopping malls, 300 kWh/sq m/year for hotels and 400 kWh/sq m/year for hospitals. Winners for new and existing office buildings have an energy efficiency index of 78.1 kWh/sq m/year for the winner and 87.99 to 171 kWh/sq m/year for the runner-ups.



MALAYSIA'S Ministry of Energy, Water and Communications Low Energy Office (LEO) Building is this year's winner in the new and existing building category. It is the first government building in Malaysia with an integrated energy-efficiency design targeting 50-percent energy saving compared to other buildings without energy efficiency design.

Awardees

• **Winner.**—The winner for this category is Malaysia's Ministry of Energy, Water and Communication for Low Energy Office or the LEO Building. It has tropical vegetation inside and outside a slightly triangular building with good use of natural ventilation, daylight assisted by light shelves in the recessed façades using shading devices and curtain wall glazing. The building demonstrates integration of the best energy efficient measures, optimized towards achieving the overall cost-effective solution.

• **First runner-up**—First runner-up is Singapore's One George Street, a 23-story commercial development featuring garden elements integrated into a handsome volumetric mass with different-sized voids sliced into the box elevated 18m above ground.

SINGAPORE'S One George Street is this year's first runner-up. It features the integration of garden elements within the vertical dimensions of the built form.

• **Second runner-up** Second runner-up is Indonesia's GRHA Wonokoyo Surabaya located in the well-known Dutch architectural district, featuring energy-efficient site planning, the use of high-performance glass that reduces noise pollution, and sophisticated energy consumption monitoring system among others.

Retrofitted and Tropical Building Category winners will be featured in the next column.

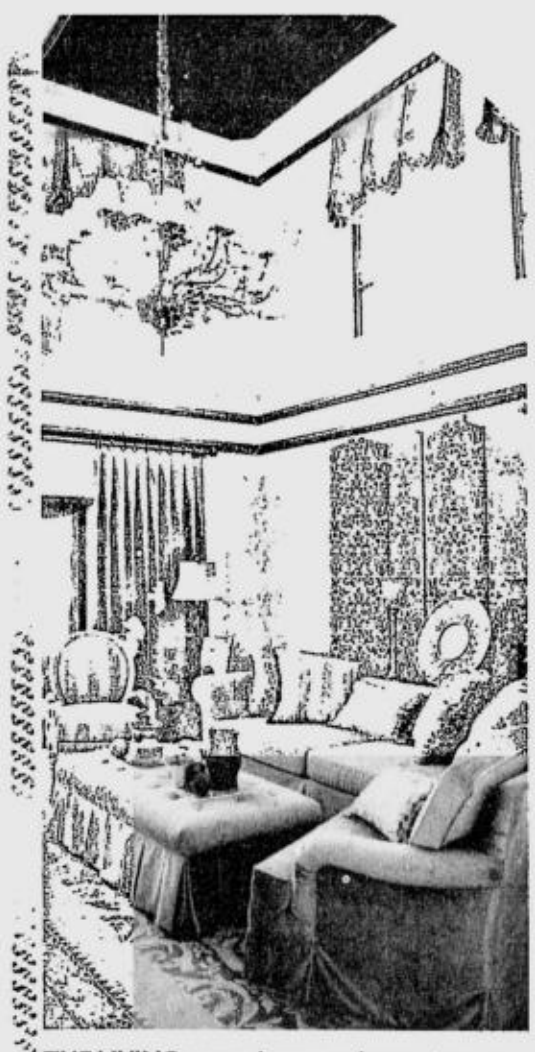
To prequalify for the 2007 Asean Energy Awards, please call Marlon Domingo of the Department of Energy at 840-2243.

The author is the elected chair of the board of judges of the Asean Energy Awards and is a practicing green architect.

For comments or inquiries, e-mail amadodejesus@gmail.com.

BRITTANY'S MICHELANGELO

A beautiful life magnified



THE LIVING room shows opulence at every angle.

WE SHOULD LEARN MORE ABOUT THE Italians. They are a proud people that know how to live life beautifully. Their olive skin turns gold from lazily basking the Mediterranean sun. Their scrumptious cuisine is celebrated in countless kitchens around the world. Their fashion is a tapestry of classic glamour and progressive chic. Their art and architecture are exemplary examples of their philosophy that embraces beauty, grace and grandeur as part of daily living.

Maverick real estate developer Brittany Corp. took inspiration from these fine attributes to create something that brings the *la dolce vita* ideal for Filipinos to experience. The Masters Collection is such a development. In its six breathtakingly beautiful new model homes named after Italian masters, you can see Brittany's innovative spirit and commitment to providing its residents the highest standard of living. There is beauty and grandeur in all things great and small. In fact, the Masters Collection is as sweet as life could possibly get.

"We at Brittany Corp. are mavericks," said Brittany president Jing Serrano. "And mavericks do not stop. Mavericks are always on the look out for new things. Mavericks should always look for new trends and make those new trends applicable to the local setting. We dare to be different."

Features magnified

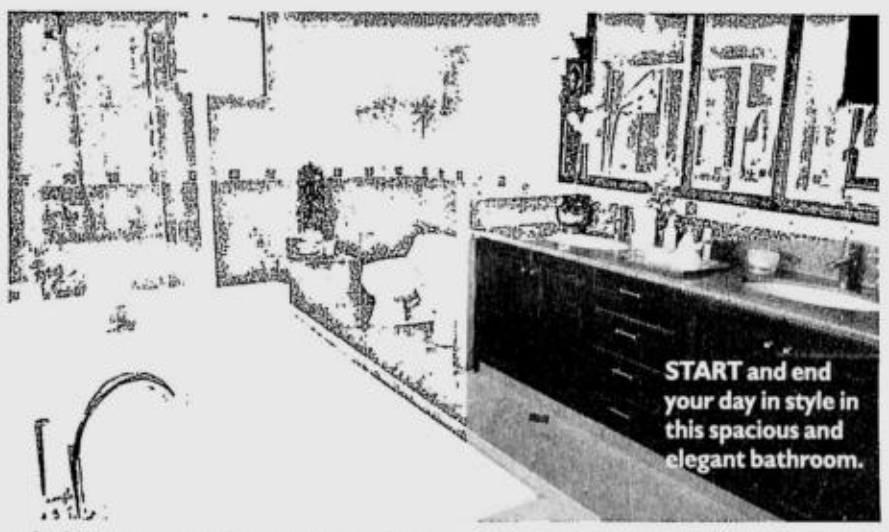
Just like the rest of the Portofino development, the Masters Collection still carries the Italian theme bearing much-loved features like the courtyard, cupola and balcony. However, these features are magnified to match the grander scale laid out by Brittany. And there is no better example of this than the paragon of grandeur that is the Michelangelo.

With about 650 sq m of floor area on an 810-sq-m lot, the magnificent Michelangelo has more than enough room to house both a growing family and a full, lush life. The imposing façade of rich terra cotta walls and striking Italianate details is enough to stop a guest at one's tracks. A heavily carved door made of dark wood bordered by stained glass windows opens into a spacious, outer lobby area and offers a clearer view of the home's layout.

The house wraps around an impressively large courtyard with a horizontal fountain flowing freely from the back wall to the center of the garden. Here, you can spend mornings reading the paper with a cup of tea under a delicate sunshine. In the afternoon, you can enjoy the cool breeze with coffee and conversation with friends. At night, the courtyard becomes bathed in moonlight, setting the mood for a truly romantic evening. The courtyard is even large enough for casual get-togethers and mini parties.

Easy to fall in love with

It is easy to fall in love with the Michelangelo once you step inside its luxurious space. The grand living room allows the homeowner to entertain in style. It features arched entryways and the two columns that appear to support it were carved from the walls. On the left side is a balcony with ornate wrought-iron details for a more rustic feel. An entryway located at the far left leads to the dining room which can accommodate everything from posh get-togethers to intimate dinners.



START and end your day in style in this spacious and elegant bathroom.

Meals are made more scrumptious in its finely constructed kitchen. Beige and black marble countertops run along two sides of the room while about four feet of counter space juts out to the center that can serve as a unique breakfast nook. Additional lighting enters the room through a tower of glass bricks on one corner and an open window just above the faucet. Storage is provided for by wooden shelves with glass doors decorated with ornate Roman-style carvings.

Choose from any of the Michelangelo four bedrooms to serve as sanctuary for your weary urban soul. This includes the Master Suite which is the very definition of luxury. As you enter, you are welcomed by a private reception area situated between the second level's reception area and the rest of the master suite. An entryway on the right side of the armoire leads to a large walk-in closet. Dark wood with ornate carvings reveal practical storage spaces for his and her clothes. A white marble top island is set at the center of the room and provides additional storage underneath. The walk-in closet leads to the bathroom proper with a tub for two, his-and-hers faucets and counters, and even separate toilet facilities.

On the right wing of the Michelangelo are two rooms—one above another—that could serve as extra guest rooms or entertainment/game room. Both rooms open up to a view of the courtyard.

A lot of personalization

"When you cater to the high-end market, a lot of personalization comes to play," Serrano added. "You definitely want your home not just to be beautiful but to really stand out. And with Michelangelo, I believe that we really achieved that."

The Michelangelo of the Master's Collection is a pioneering development conceptualized and designed exclusively by Brittany. The Masters Collection is a unique property within the Portofino development which includes Portofino Heights, Portofino South, the Courtyards of Portofino I and II, and WideLots of Portofino. Brittany and its properties remain as an investment of choice in real estate development today. More than just a safe investment, it has developed into a wise choice for homeowners with a vision for the future. For inquiries and property previews, call 850-2868 or 850-3084, or visit www.brittany.com.ph.

Lots designed to suit individual needs

THE PREFERENCES OF VARIOUS PERSONality types have been factored into the subdivision plans of Anvaya Cove, the first leisure development of Ayala Land Premier, according to project architect Manny Illana.

The 320-hectare Anvaya Cove is a two-hour drive away from Metro Manila, located in Morong, Bataan, and adjacent to the Subic Bay Freeport. It also has lots, which cater to a variety of individuals' needs and tastes.

Adventurous and sporty individuals as well as box-seat aficionados may be attracted to the Cliffside, the first of two neighborhoods in Anvaya Cove which provides a ringside view of the sea and future activities such as sailing, jet-skiing and the like. With around 800 mature mango and narra trees, most of the Cliffside lots ranging from 500 to 1,600 sq m were sold out quickly.

Finding solace

Individuals who seek serenity and enjoy introspection will find solace at the Mango Grove. As its name implies, the 30-ha. neighborhood has a multitude of mature mango trees and most of the lots here have views of the mountain. In one special knoll in the area, there is a cluster of shady mango trees with trunks that are two meters in circumference. The trees are estimated to be at a century old. Lot cuts here are smaller and range from 450 to 600 sq m.

Illana further notes that lots overlooking the beach would be the natural choices for those that are outward looking. "They can see and be seen from these lots and it is very near to where the center is, where action and fun is," says Manny Illana, Anvaya Cove project architecture and planning manager. For the introverts, the parkside lots offer peace and quiet since it will be surrounded by plants and trees.

In addition to lots, Ayala Land is also offering 17 preconstructed villas with premium finishes designed by LVLocsin Partners. Each is a short walk away from the beach and represents the perfect Asian tropical retreat. In a bid to redefine luxury living, residents of the villas have the option to avail of room service, housekeeping services ands well as garden maintenance.

Feng shui principles

Aside from the personality type, other prospective Anvaya Cove lot buyers utilize feng shui principles in choosing their piece of land, taking into account the orientation of the lot and wind direction.

A long wide stretch of beach, gracious mango, molave and narra trees, as well as views of the sea and mountain amid the rolling terrain are among the natural attractions of Anvaya Cove. The irregular lot cuts in Anvaya Cove collectively represent the price its developers chose to pay to keep as much as possible the stunning features of the seaside property in Bataan.

Natural attractions

"Our game plan was to retain as many natural attractions as we could," he relates. Thus, when a proposed roadway would destroy a particularly attractive vantage point or a decades-old hardwood tree, planning efficiency would give way to accommodating the natural elements. The road would be rerouted for the sake of preserving the view or the established flora.

Illana relates that the development has been attracting residents of northern towns and cities of the National Capital Region. Most of the lot buyers are in their mid 30s, with families and kids.

For more information about Anvaya Cove, please call 728-7000 or visit its website at www.anvayacove.com or www.ayalalandpremier.com

Ayala Land Premier is the new name for the top end developments of Ayala Land providing security, ultimate comfort, and privacy.

NOW READY FOR VIEWING

DMCI Homes announced that the three designer models of Woodland Hills in Carmona, Cavite, an exclusive house-and-lot community, are now ready for viewing. Done in modern contemporary design, the duplex, two-story, loft-type model has spacious floor area and stylish interiors ideal for start-up large families. Offering resort-type amenities such as a swimming pool, basketball court, viewing deck, pocket parks, biking paths, children's playground and lounge area, Woodland Hills units are available in easy and flexible terms. For inquiries, call 888-333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com.

A promising financial future awaits with Bay Garden

WITH VARIOUS HOUSING PROJECTS mushrooming all over the metropolis, there are now more options available to homebuyers. But with each development claiming to be the ideal home, how does one discern which of these truly offers a worthy investment?

Looking at the rest of the world as example, properties that are considered to be premier and most lavish are those situated by the water. From Singapore to San Francisco, buyers choose to invest in a home that affords them both a vibrant city lifestyle and magnificent views of the sea—truly a luxury for urbanites who are usually forced to live in overpriced cramped spaces in the middle of the concrete jungle. In fact, due to the high demand of homes by the bay, current homeowners are now benefiting from their properties' rising land values as more and more people seek out this rejuvenating type of lifestyle.

There is no longer any need to look to other countries to experience that same improved quality of life enjoyed by bay area residents. Federal Land, property arm of the Metrobank Group, offers clients a chance to invest in a home that guarantees a tranquil lifestyle and a promising financial future with Bay Garden, a first-class condominium development right next door to Manila Bay.

The Manila Bay area is renowned for its picturesque views, scenic landscapes, proximity to recreational activities, accessibility to Binondo, Malate and Makati CBD, and rich cultural offerings, all of which make it a highly attractive place to live in. And with the recent opening of the famous Mall of Asia, this booming location is becoming more enviable by the second. Even if located in the heart of the metropolis, Bay Garden assures residents of a peaceful environment where they could simply forget about work-related stress and anxieties.

This plush high-rise abode is nestled inside Metropolitan Park, an emerging masterplanned community. Sixty percent of this 40-hectare development is devoted to open space and sprawling gardens—the perfect complement to the natural beauty of the sea. It is often termed as Manila's best kept secret because aside from its lush environment, Metropolitan Park is free from pollution, congestion, faulty sewage systems and other problems that most city dwellers are forced to put up with.

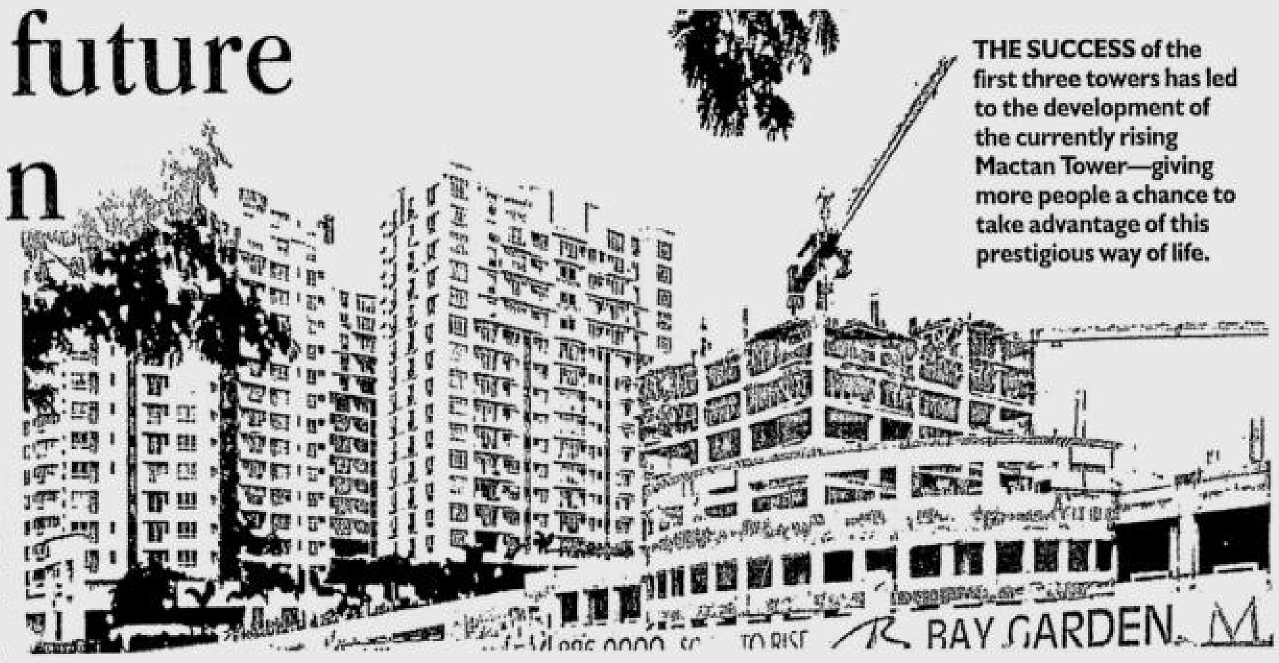
Federal Land has completed Bay Garden's first phase with three luxurious residential towers, namely: Anchor, Boardwalk and Crystal. The success of the first three towers has led to the development of the currently rising Mactan Tower—giving more people a chance to take advantage of this prestigious way of life.

The name Mactan was derived from one of the country's most famous vacation spots since the latest tower features a unique tropical charm complemented by resort-inspired amenities. Clients can choose from one-bedroom to three-bedroom units, all of which feature an outdoor lanai for a more spacious feel and floor-to-ceiling windows that make the priceless views of the bay sunset and sunrise even more breathtaking. Generous parking space, tight round-the-clock security, advanced fire and safety measures also add to the exclusivity of this high-rise residence.

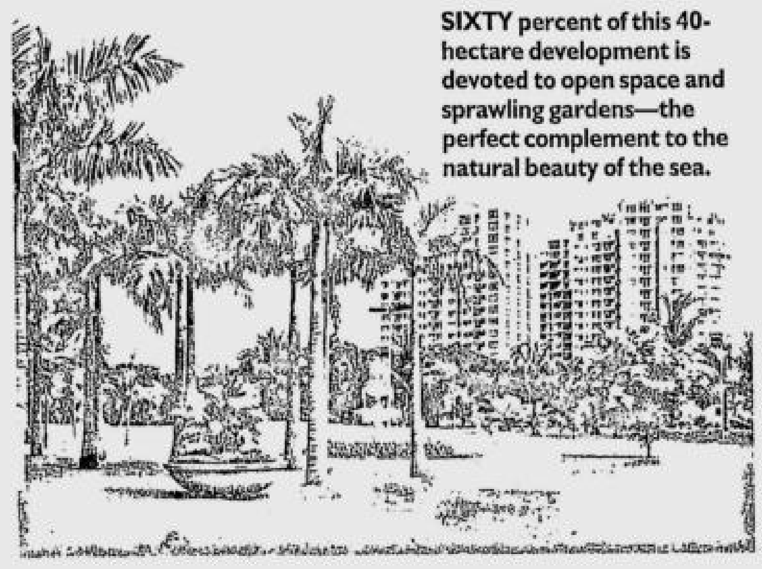
Purchasing a home is certainly the biggest investment every individual can make and one's personal finances are the biggest factor affecting one's ability to invest in a quality home. Bearing the clients' needs in mind, Federal Land has come up with various flexible payment terms that the buyers can choose from, ensuring that the enriching lifestyle offered by Bay Garden is attainable.

Coming home to Bay Garden offers priceless rewards; whether it is having access to a rejuvenating urban lifestyle or the high investment returns of owning a prime property, Bay Garden allows you to live life to the fullest by day and sleep with a sound mind at night.

For more information on Bay Garden and Mactan Tower, call 889-6414 or 889-4900 or e-mail inquiry@federalland.com.ph or visit www.baygarden.com.ph.



THE SUCCESS of the first three towers has led to the development of the currently rising Mactan Tower—giving more people a chance to take advantage of this prestigious way of life.


SIXTY percent of this 40-hectare development is devoted to open space and sprawling gardens—the perfect complement to the natural beauty of the sea.

Unique clubhouse to complement . . .

From page B2-4

...The clubhouse complex including the gazebo pavilion will carry the flower garden ambience, which is the Bloomfields Tagaytay's overall concept.

"Imagine yourself walking on a winding path through a beautiful flower garden gently nudged by man. Such journey takes you into a world of wonder as you turn a corner to see a spectacular American rose or an exotic orchid. Such is the experience we would like our residents to have at Bloomfields Tagaytay," explained Alferez.

She added RHI is planning to place colorful perennial flower gardens around the clubhouse.

"This should be a place to meet fellow homeowners, enjoy a relaxing nature-inspired ambience as well as hold community or family events," said Alferez.

Complement

According to Alferez, the clubhouse will complement the future commercial block that will soon rise in front of Bloomfields Tagaytay.

"To be located within this block is the proposed Robinsons covered sports center, lifestyle mall and serviced apartelle, which will be masterplanned to match Tagaytay city's natural leisure setting," she said.

The RHI is the housing subsidiary of Robinsons Land, a real estate giant known for its industrial plants, malls and condominiums.

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Look For: GRACE

INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Saturday, August 5, 2006

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM
ABC 5	Kid's TV	KNN	Anime Ring Kaisho		PBA				
ABS-CBN 2		Star Magic Presents		Nagmamahal, Kapamilya		Let's Go		Komiks	
Cartoon Network	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	The Road Runner Show	Tom & Jerry Show	Bat Alien Planet Sleep Camp Lazlo Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy Cow & Chicken Pet Alien Camp Lazlo		The Simpsons	
Cinema One	S2pid Luv				Bahay Ni Lola				Lisensyadong Kamao
Cinemax			The Boys & Girl From County Clare (3:45 PM)				Somebody Has To Shoot The Picture		
CNN		World News		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport
Crime/Suspense		Mastermind	Forensic Files	Profiler		Psychic Detectives	Body Of Evidence	What Should You Do?	
Discovery Channel				Boys Of H Company		Power Zone			
Disney Channel	Lizzie McGuire/Art Attack/Billy & Buddy	Totally Spies- Double Episodes		Brandy & Mr. Whiskers	Lilo & Stitch/Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Martin Mystery/That's So Raven	Buzz On Maggie/Lilo & Stitch/Emperor's New Groove	Phil Of The Future/Emperor's New School	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody
ESPN						Women's Pro Billiards WPBA Carolina Classic Finals		LPGA Golf McDonald's LPGA C'ship	
ETC		Everwood 2		Friends 10	Will & Grace 4	Veronica Mars 2		The O.C. 3	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Trading Spouses		Today Show - 1 Hour Version		Dateline		Showdog Moms & Dads	
EWTN	Visionaries, Mystics & Stigmatists	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Image Of God	Adventures In Odyssey	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Knights Of St. Michael	Catholic Compass		Life Is Worth Living
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Special Report With Brit Hume	
GMA 7	Startalk				Wish Ko Lang (4:20 PM)		Fantastikids (5:20 PM)		Pinoy Pop Superstar
Hallmark Channel		Strong Medicine (3:15 PM)		I Was A Teenage Faust (4:05 PM)				Homecoming	
HBO	Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy				Vanity Fair				True Lies (6:15 PM)
Hero TV	Mon Colle Knights	Shaider	Mask Rider Ryuki	Gransazers	Shaman King	Bucky the Incredible	Jester The Adventurer	Musumet	The X-Treme Team
IBC 13		Home Shopping Network		Nations Peacekeeper	Auto Review	Getz Mo Getz Ko		Pangarap Kong Jackpot	
JackTV	X-Men	JLU	The Batman	Evolver	Filter	Bottomline		Raw	
Lifestyle Network	Living Space	HGTV Special		Sheila Bridges: Designer Living	Radical Sabbatical	Simply Wine Andrea Immer	Inside Dish	My Country, My Kitchen	Emeril Live
MTV Philippines MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	MYX Presents		Take 5	Radio MYX	Top Of The Pops	Star MYX
National Geographic		The Living Edens Kamchatka		Zhang ZiYi: Creative Asian Beauty		Beauty Queens: [illegible]		Wild Indonesia: Where Worlds Collide	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Bakbakan Sa Tagaytay		Kamao		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Euromaxx	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Tamang Daan		Net 25 Report Weekend Edition	Gabay Sa Kalusugan
Nickelodeon	Drake & Josh/Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Just For Kicks	Catscratch	Avatar: Legend Of Aang	Danny Phantom	Tools, Kid's Choice Awards	SpongeBob SquarePants
PBO			Deadly Brothers				Magdalena Town Homes		
Qtv		Lois And Clark		Galaxy Angels		Posh		Fans Kita	
RPN 9		Go Negosyo		Biyaheng Langit	Ride, Eat, Travel	Man & Machine		Isumbong Mo! (Tulfo Brothers)	
SBN 21								Barangay Uniting Thru Chess	
Solar Sports		USAB World Tour: USA vs. Puerto Rico				Philippine Open '06 MXD Finals		WTA [illegible] Open SFinals	
Sports Plus		US Bank C'ship Highlights		5th Samsung Amateur Golf	Inside the PGA	Raceworld		World Poker Tour Hollywood Home	
Star Movies			The One (3:45 PM)			Runaway Jury (5:15 PM)			
Star World		Rockstar: Supernova		Miami Vice		Gillette 2006 Fifa World Cup		Less Than Perfect	The Drew Carey Show
Studio 23								Sports TV	Survivor Panama Exile Island

Channel	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5	Wow Maling Mali		Ripley's Believe It or Not		ABC Action Theater					
ABS-CBN 2	John En Shirley		TV Patrol World	XXX		Aalog alog		Sabado Movie Greats		Sports Unlimited
Cartoon Network	Batman Beyond: Return Of The Joker/Hamtaro/Scooby-Doo & The Witch's Ghost/My Scene		Courage The Cowardly Dog	The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy (8:45 PM)	The Simpsons	The Batman	Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Gundam Seed		Aqua Teen Hunger Force/Sealab 2021
Cinema One				Kahit Konting Pagtingin				Abot Kamay Ang Pangarap		
Cinemax	The Relic (7:15 PM)				Eternal Sunshine Of The Spotless Mind	White Hunter Black Heart (10:45 PM)				
CNN	World News		World News	World Sport	World News				Talk Asia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart
Crime/Suspense	Law & Order	Prison Break	Bones	Prison Break	Vegas CSU	E-Ring				
Discovery Channel	Discovery Encore		On The Run		I Shouldn't Be Alive		A Haunting		Perfect Disaster	
Disney Channel	That's So Raven/Emperor's New School	Wonderful World Of Disney			Mr. Bean	America's Funniest Home Video	Kim Possible	Martin Mystery	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN			The Beautiful Game: 100 Yrs of FIFA	Major League Baseball Friday						NBA Anthology
ETC	Beauty And The Geek 2		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Saturday Night Live		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue	NBC Nightly News	Hollywood One On One	Blowout 2		Inside the Actor's Studio		ER		NBC Nightly News	WSJR
EWTN	The World Over Encore		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Word Was Made Flesh	Voices On Virtue	Backstage	Life on The Rock Encore	
Fox News	Fox & Friends Saturday						Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In
GMA 7		Bitoy's Funniest Videos (7:20 PM)		Kapuso Mo, Jessica Soho	Imbestigador (9:05 PM)			Hokus Pokus (10:20 PM)		Showbiz Stripped
Hallmark Channel			The 10th Kingdom		Bonanno: A Godfather's Story			Bonanno: A Godfather's Story		
HBO					Birth			Entourage 03: Talk Show (10:35 PM)	Entourage 04: Date Night	The Chronicles Of Riddick
Hero TV	Love Hina	Fruits Basket	Lost Universe	Hero TV [illegible]	Babel II	II OVA	Captain Kuppa	Mon Colle Knights	Shaider	Mask Rider Ryuki
IBC 13	EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Bitag		Pilipinas Sabong Sports	Christian Bautista		
JackTV			Distraction	Banzai	Last Comic Standing		South Park	South Park	Drawn Together	Crank Yankers
Lifestyle Network		Iron Chef America		Merge		Style Star	I Do Diaries		E! Extra: High Price Of Fame	
MTV Philippines MYX	Laguna Beach, OPM MYX	8th & Ocean Pop MYX	MYX Live!		Pinoy MYX Countdown				MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	The Taiwan Touch: Monkey Business	The Taiwan Touch: Monkey Business	The Living Edens: Borneo - Island In The Clouds		Dangerous Encounters: Super Snakes		Dangerous Encounters: Dens of Danger		No Borders: Living in a Perfect World	
NBN	Youth Voice-Debate		GSIS Member's Hour		Isa Hour On NBN		A.S.K.		Krusada Kontra Krimen	
Net 25	Tribe	Quadriga	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang [illegible]		Kaagapay Sa Hanapbuhay	Net 25 Report Weekend Edition	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Tomorrow Today
Nickelodeon	Just For Kicks	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Dark Oracle	Girls In Love	The Amanda Show	The Brothers Garcia	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO		Night Of The Champions				Abrakadabra				Tahanan Ng Ligaya
Qtv	Ayll Robot		Day-Off		Sabado Showdown				Groupee TV	
RPN 9	Blind Justice		CSI Miami		Saturday Night Playhouse					
SBN 21	Sony Music Video		Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Shepherd's Voice		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports				GWS 31-2006	Superfights: C. Estrada vs. D. Diaz				Philippine Open '06 MXD Finals	
Sports Plus			Ultimate Fighting Championship Japan				Extreme Masters Day 2			
Star Movies		Confessions Of A Teenage Drama Queen			The Mummy Returns				Sideways (11:10 PM)	
Star World	Life As We Know It		TNA Xplosion		World's Most Amazing Videos/ The [illegible] Laureus World Sports Awards/ Annual All Life		Enterprise		Road Trip	
Studio 23		Wickedly Perfect (7:20 PM)	7th Heaven (8:10 PM)			Studio 23 Presents				

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

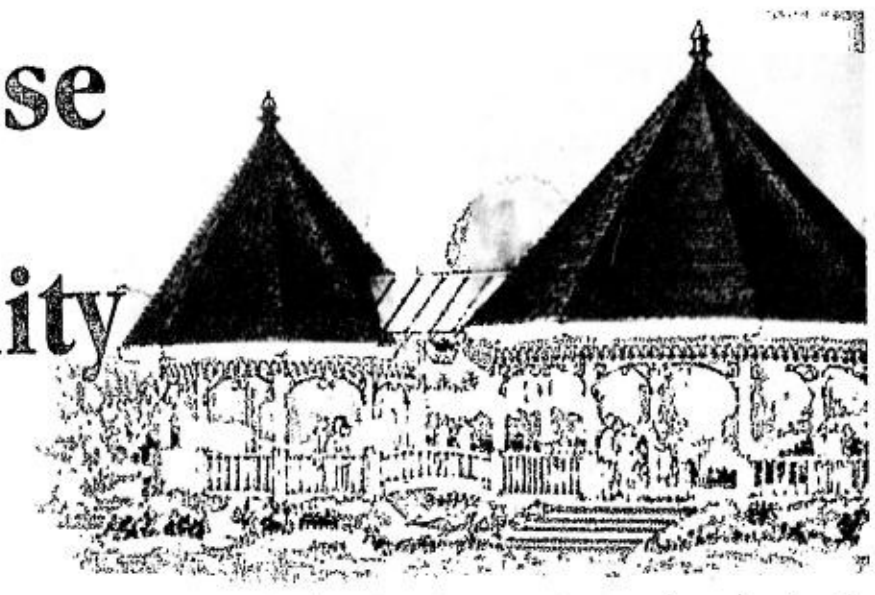
Unique clubhouse to complement garden community

By Charles E. Buban

ROBINSONS HOMES Inc. recently revealed its plan for the open space area located inside Bloomfields Tagaytay, the developer's current project in Cavite province.

"This open space area, envisioned to be the heart and soul of the community, will feature a gazebo pavilion with entry court for assembly, adult swimming pool, children's pool, bath house, children's play space, skating rink, service pavilion (office, pantry, public toilet), lawn area and garden pond," according to Marilu Alferez, RHI senior vice president and general manager.

Bloomfields Tagaytay is a distinctly elegant residential 4.4 hectare community that will soon rise on Tagaytay-Nasugbu highway right across Josephine's Restaurant. With spacious and well-appointed amenities, this development is RHI's one-of-a-kind upscale project to date.



THE GAZEBO carries a Southern American accent that complements well to the flower garden concept of the community.

Enjoy stay

"We decided to step up our efforts to this clubhouse considering we want our future residents to enjoy their stay in Tagaytay and at the same time be able to cater to some who would opt to remain inside the community and enjoy its surroundings and amenities," Alferez explained.

UNIQUE/ B2-3

Architects, designers, artists donate works for a good cause

TAGUIG CITY MAYOR FREDDIE MAY NOT yet realize it, but he apparently has struck a wellspring of support from the kind-hearted members of Philippine society for his vision to improve the lives of his poor constituents through an innovative mass housing program that, when replicated on a massive scale, could effectively address the country's urban poor problem.

Tinga's formula is deceptively simple—invite private individuals and entities to give whatever they can easily afford for the Taguig Family Townhomes program—whether through financial support, construction materials, manpower or professional services.

Honest-to-goodness attempt

The donors immediately saw what Tinga was up to. Here is an honest-to-goodness attempt to provide decent housing for the poor, and they know it can be done through a serious collective and collaborative effort much like the other mass housing initiatives from the private sector such as the Habitat for Humanity and the Gawad Kalinga projects.

The Taguig Family Townhomes, however, is probably the first serious and earnest attempt by a local government unit to pursue a mass housing project in partnership with private sector donors. Such LGU-private sector partnership is rare and yet Tinga's initiative now shows us it can be done.

Heart–warming response

Among the first to respond to Tinga's appeals for support is a group of renowned architects, interior designers and creative artists that include Anna Sy of Xcell Property Ventures, Tessa Prieto-Valdes, Arturo Go, Ivan Acuña, Doltz Pilar, G & W Architects, architect Joey Mastrili, and Robinsons Land. They have all contributed their works for the Taguig Family Townhomes free of charge.

"The response is heartwarming, to say the least. It only goes to show that when you desire to do something for our less fortunate brothers, so many talented and capable individuals are always ready to help," Tinga said.

The architects, designers and artists have all committed to design the model units for the 25-square meter individual units for the Taguig Family Townhomes. The model units will then become the pattern for the beneficiaries of the housing program to choose from.

Target dwelling units

Overall, Tinga envisions to build at least 30,000 dwelling units for the poorest homeless residents of Taguig which, paradoxically, is where the country's most expensive residential developments are found. Tinga said the completion of the 30,000 units is estimated within 10 years.

The mayor said aside from the designers, those who likewise donated for the completion of the model units include furniture makers, suppliers and contractors.

Under the Taguig Family Townhomes program, the city government will put up two-story buildings in various locations, with each building composed of eight residential units.

Each unit costs P150,000, and the beneficiaries will pay through an easy financing program with an initial down payment of P5,000 and the balance payable at P600 to P900 monthly for a maximum period of 30 years, depending on the financing rate for the particular site and recipient.

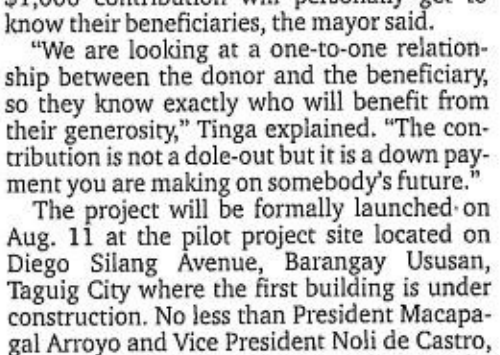
For somebody's future

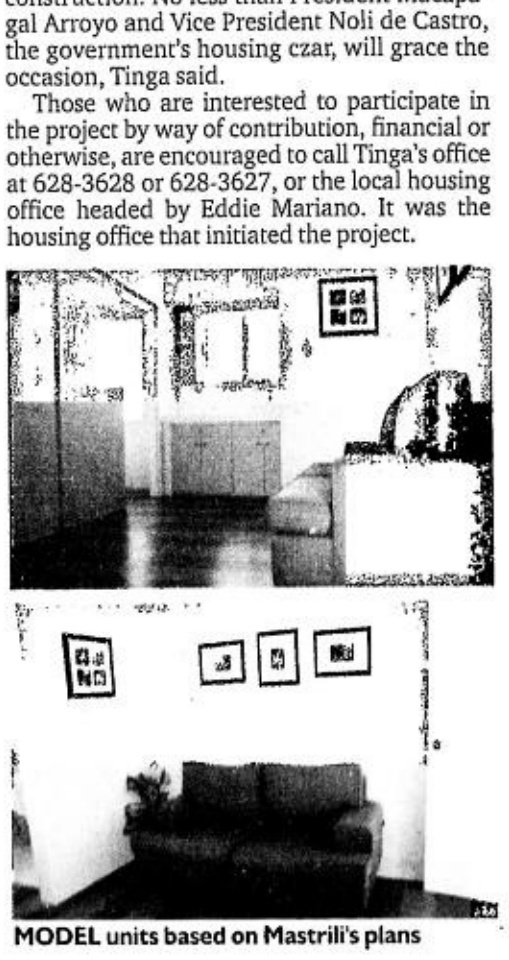
Some of the units will be subsidized through fund-raising efforts by the local government and nongovernment organizations (NGOs). Donors who contribute P50,000 or $1,000 contribution will personally get to know their beneficiaries, the mayor said.

"We are looking at a one-to-one relationship between the donor and the beneficiary, so they know exactly who will benefit from their generosity," Tinga explained. "The contribution is not a dole-out but it is a down payment you are making on somebody's future."

The project will be formally launched on Aug. 11 at the pilot project site located on Diego Silang Avenue, Barangay Ususan, Taguig City where the first building is under construction. No less than President Macapagal Arroyo and Vice President Noli de Castro, the government's housing czar, will grace the occasion, Tinga said.

Those who are interested to participate in the project by way of contribution, financial or otherwise, are encouraged to call Tinga's office at 628-3628 or 628-3627, or the local housing office headed by Eddie Mariano. It was the housing office that initiated the project.





MODEL units based on Mastrili's plans

Introducing another Landmark,
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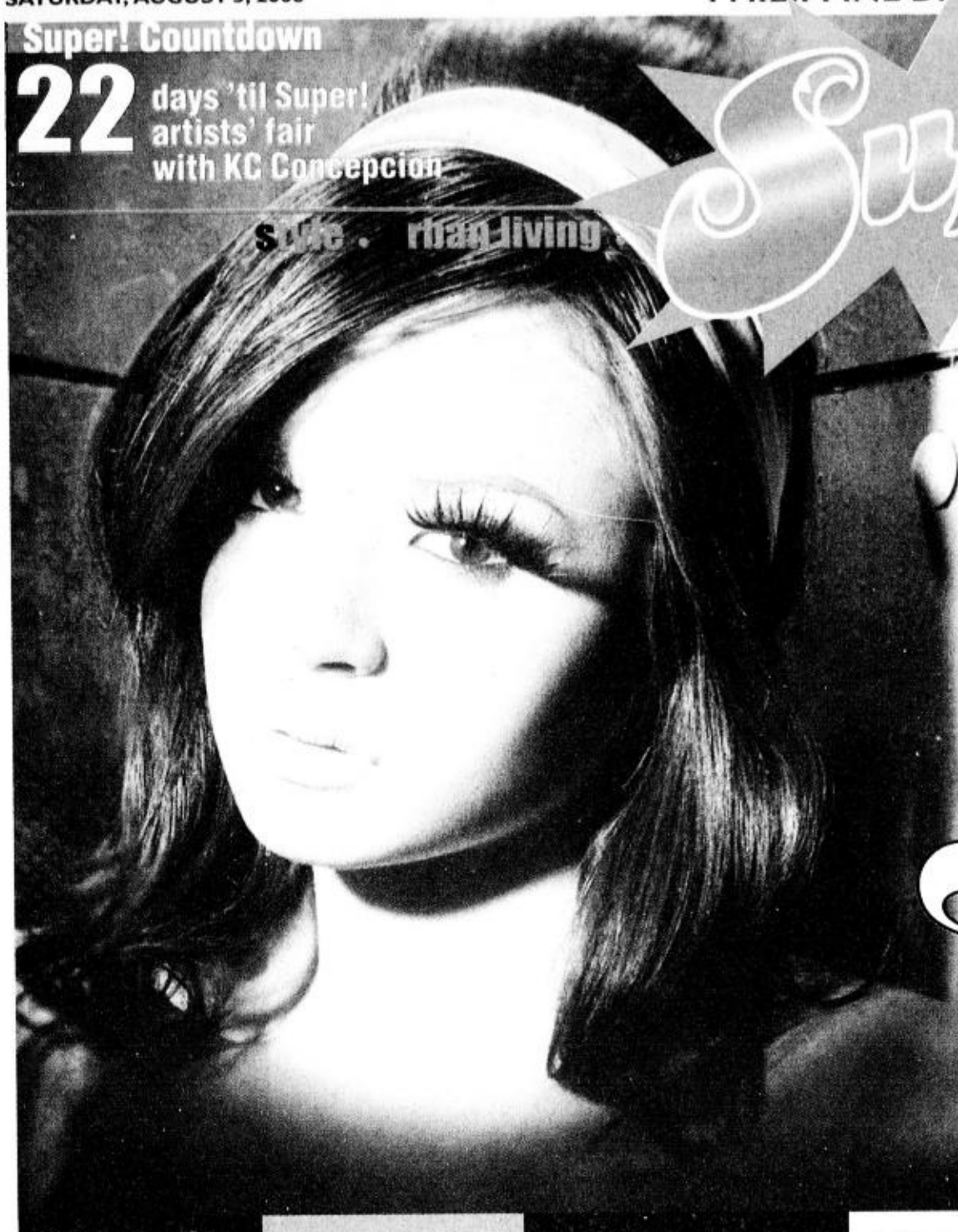

Two tone

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Hair: FELICITY SON for KIEHL'S STYLIST SERIES
Cover star: AMP Endorser GEORGINA WILSON in House Of Laurel (Ghetto Fabulous Collection)

Music overload and other Super! events! page D4

Fight ageing the Super way page C2

A Super **Pussycat** invasion page D1

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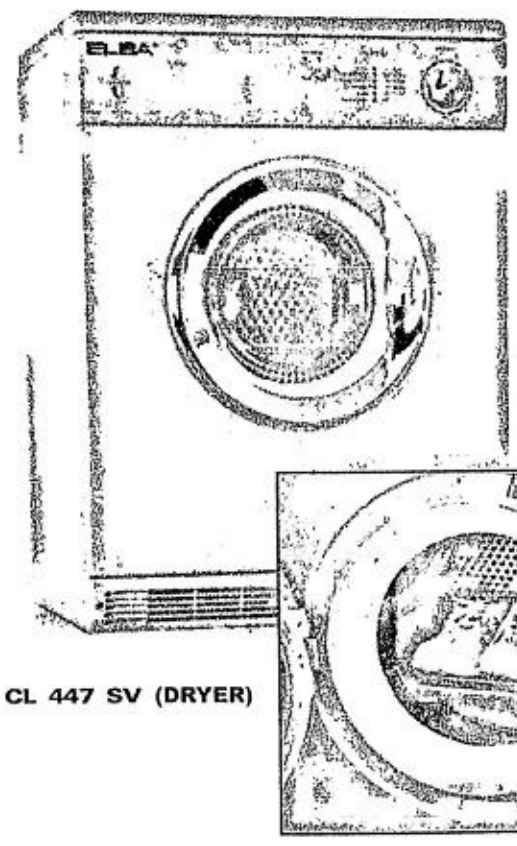

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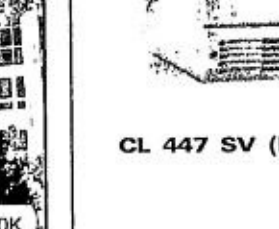
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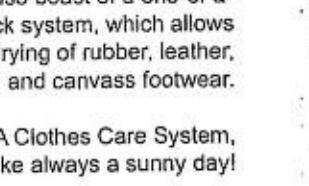
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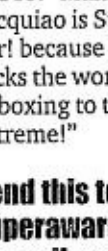
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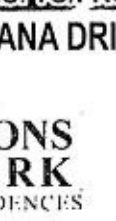

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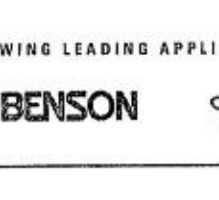
2500 points
JVC GZ-MG30U
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• 25x Optical
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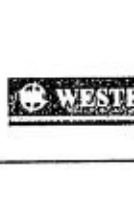
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Check the Lifestyle Section every other week for the latest in SM Advantage promos and highlights

Ti
Depo

By Katrina A. Holigores

OUR LIVES REVOLVE around time... and clichés. While time travel has been an inspiration for scientists, reversing time has been the goal of every Belo billboard in the country. Anti-aging is the new "it"—there's no doubt about it.

Forget about the beauties you see splashed across the magazines. If you've got the look that is untouched by Father Time (with Photoshop and air-brushing as step sisters) then your line-free skin, your gravity-defying body and your not-a-grey-strand-in-sight hair make you the icon for the "ageless" society. Pill-popping, botox-pumping, collagen-enhancing and in some extreme cases placenta-smearing (ew) are just some of the tools that we think can make time stop in its tracks. We can certainly slow down the external indications that we are getting a year or two older, but time waits for no one, and no, you are not the exception.

It has always been a curious sight to see girls talk about how they look now and how they looked then. In fact, it borders on amusing, partly the talk is a pep talk (Oh no, of course not, you look great!) and partly a justification for the tens of thousands of pesos spent on 200 sessions of the latest and the greatest battalion of time stopping machinery at Marie-France, Calayan, Belo. But the last time I checked though the only thing that stops you from getting any older is death. Hmph.

What about the bounty of self-help books, yoga, meditation, organic foods out there? Once, I was even gifted with a book by a medium that guaranteed to reverse aging by doing several things—finding a power position and spinning in reverse, chanting and other stuff which I do not discount but sounded kind of hokey. I look in the mirror, and honestly, I think I look more or less the way I did when I was kid. Sure, there have been changes and I certainly cannot stay up all night and wake up after only two hours of sleep expecting to be rosy-cheeked and bright-eyed, but at least I still recognize the face that stares back at me. Developing a personal relationship with one's self is the greatest youth retainer ever. Why? Because when you have a deep, deep sense of self, if you know who you are and what you want—you will never age.

Fear, stress and uncertainty coupled with bad diet, lack of exercise and poor hygiene

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Sittings Editor: DAVID MILAN
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Sublime, facetious, fabulous, marvelous, darling and Rajo Laurel's other favorite words

The thing about fame is that... it's overrated.

The thing I love most about what I do is... making people feel and look beautiful!

People might be surprised to know that... I'm shy.

The most important thing I've ever learned is that... people are generally good. It's the circumstances that surround them that make them evil.

I wish when I started off I've been told that... some people say what they mean but they don't mean what they say.

The worst thing that ever happened to me was... having my heart broken.

And what this taught me was... whatever that doesn't kill me will only make me stronger.

The secret to happiness... is acceptance.

My best ever outfit consisted of... Viktor Jeans, a navy blue Giordano shirt and cowboy boots.

My Super! Saturday night consists of... dinner at a friend's house.

The soundtrack to my life would include... "The Windmills of Your Mind" by Shirley Bassey and the entire soundtrack of "The Sound of Music."

If I was invisible for a day, I would... sit and observe how Manny V. Pangilinan works.

The thing that makes me most angry is... CHILD ABUSE!

If I was the most powerful person on earth I would... eradicate war and poverty.

The best thing about family is... unconditional love.

When I'm gone, they'll probably say... "He was a nice guy."

If money was no option I would... build more schools and improve lives of the less fortunate.

When I retire, I would like to... have resthouses in my favorite places: New York, Paris and Batangas.

The world would be a much better place if... everybody does yoga.

My hero is... my grandfather, Jose P. Laurel III

The thing that makes my life worth living is... love.

My greatest hope for the future is that... my brand lives longer than my life.

The worst thing somebody said about me was... I forgét those things (I don't dwell on negativity).

My favorite moments are when... I'm in an airplane, on my way to a country I've never been to.

My most embarrassing moment was... when I forgot my lines in a theater production.

I'm saving up for... my dream beach house!

My biggest indulgence is... traveling.

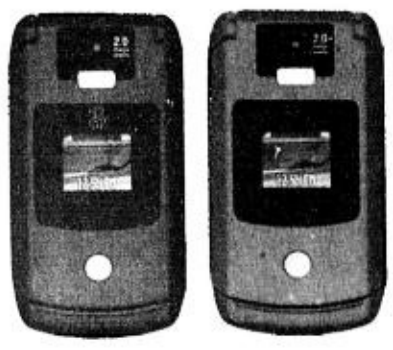
My current state of mind is... that I'm busy.

If someone would play me in my biopic it would be... Philip Seymour Hoffman

My 5 favorite words are... Sublime, Facetious, Fabulous, Marvelous and Darling

I aspire to be... skinny!

MOTOROLA



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are the biggest enemies a wannabe immortal faces everyday. Just making a simple decision is enough to furrow a brow, wrinkle a forehead or make someone chug down a couple of light beers if only to "think" about it. We think so much about the world, what goes on around us and the way it affects our lives that we lose track of what we wanted our life to be in the first place. A developed sense of self, a healthy dose of self-esteem is worth more than being dipped in moisturizers every morning. Knowing that you are serving a purpose and that you are on track is enough ammunition to face the day (but don't forget the sunblock). Worry not, wrinkle not is my motto. Pay too much attention to your flaws and they will multiply. That small little laugh line around your eye will begin to resemble an anaconda if you stare at it enough—how scary is that?

Maybe what we can all do, because yes, past a certain age, NONE of us want to look older than we are, is invest in time rather than trying to run it to the ground. What do we do, on a regular basis that insures us lighter, brighter moments rather than lighter, brighter skin? When was the last time you gave up some of your vanity time to provide more time for those who need it most? Aging is natural, not a disease, and hopefully it is viewed as a companion to maturity and wisdom. Look back at the last 5 years of your life and see how far you've come, and if you are not where you want to be, then stop looking at your pores and start to plot your course and the next steps that will take you forward.

How have you invested your time on this earth? Have you planted seeds that will one day grow? What kind of harvest will you reap as you grow older? How deep have your relationships with your peers, lovers, family become? What kind of life has been cultivating underneath your gym-d up, carb-free physique? Time deposits, small, maybe irrelevant to your actions that impact everyone else, and perhaps you one day. The world they say is getting smaller, so how much of it have you been in touch with?

Can you recall how it felt, to just love what you were doing, who you were with, and what you looked like? How about dreams and aspirations that at one time were far from impossible? Do you remember what you wanted to be if you could not fail?

Take time out this weekend to look back on the things that made you truly happy. It certainly wasn't just your looks. Clock is ticking...

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May I have your (partial) attention please!

OUT THE WINDOW

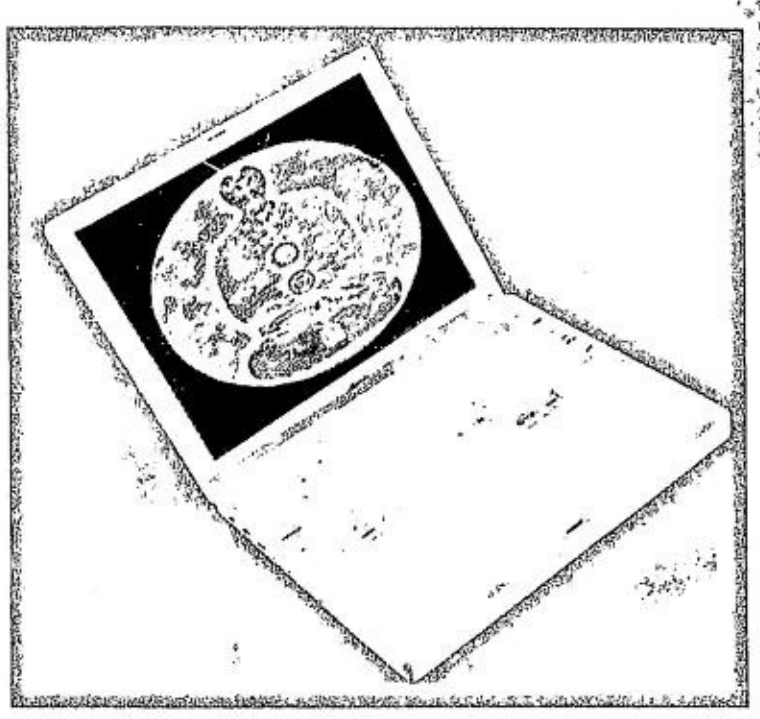
Tals Diaz

A QUARTER OF A CENTURY AGO, MTV left its first, deep footprint on the pop cultural landscape. As straightforward as its initials stood for—Music Television, it revolutionized the way we enjoyed music and lived out our lives. The trailblazing cable channel kicked off at midnight with the music video of "Video Killed the Radio Star." For the next 25 years, MTV not only killed radio stars, but it greatly rocked the world of music, trends, fashion and even filmmaking with the introduction of the very first reality TV show, "The Real World."

The images seen on MTV catered to the sensibilities of a youth perennially diagnosed with a short attention span—a condition linked to TV watching at an early age. Thus, the music on MTV was interpreted visually in quick, almost frenetic clips. Within the space of those few minutes, stories were told through pulses of moving pictures. It may have been diagnostic at the start, as it satisfied an age group's short attention spandwidth, yet it could have eventually played catalyst as if further heightened attention disorder among young people.

Lo and behold, this in-your-face, insta-addicted and pop culturally-attuned set was then christened as "the MTV Generation." My handy Wikipedia defines this as "the sub-generation that includes the end of the Generation X (a generation following the post-World War II baby boom) yet importantly includes the elders of Generation Y (a generation considered to follow Generation X from 1975 onwards). The worldwide acknowledgment of an MTV Generation has been proven through the success of MTV and its by-products on a global scale as well as its influence upon youth culture and society throughout the 1990s."

As a dyed in the wool member of this gen, I'd personally define it as being a part of an awareness group complete with some form of a secret handshake: we'd have a visual response in our heads when asked to recall, say, U2's "Mysterious Ways" video, or complement Blind Melon's song "No Rain" with an image of a chubby, bespectacled dancing little girl in a bee costume. We wouldn't flinch if someone connected Madonna to a gondola in Venice. All these images were—are—embedded knowledge taken from another universe running parallel to our own. We related with each other, short attention span mind to fellow short attention span mind, through this language of pulse-like visuals and accompanying sounds.



When the MTV Generation grows up

Fast track to two and a half decades later. The MTV generation is now skimming their twenties and thirties, and armed with iPods. All grown up and stuff (*sigh!*) What has happened to us? Already conditioned with a short attention span, we find ourselves mesmerized by more than just the flickering images on a TV screen in our daily lives.

In the era of email, text messaging and chat, a new generation has evolved: the Google Generation. It's both highly connected and yet dreadfully disconnected. With the ability to link up instantly with people not physically present, and all over the world, Googlites are live nodes in the virtual universe. And yet because of this plugged-in condition, we are usually not as fully in sync among present company.

This condition of "always looking over our shoulders for a better conversation partner" as Newsweek describes, is called "Continuous Partial Attention" or CPA. The term was coined by Linda Stone, the creative thinker from Apple and Microsoft. CPA describes the way we cope with the constant influx of communication coming at us. In an interview, Stone explained, "with continuous partial attention, we're scanning incoming alerts for the one best thing to seize upon." It is motivated by a desire to connect and be connected to The Great Network, and all we need to do is to choose to plug into it. This is the way of life for the Always-On society, in order to keep up with our daily responsibilities and relationships.

Guilty as electro-charged!

So then, are we afflicted with Continuous Partial Attention? I raise a guilty hand, while simultaneously cursing that technology has saved me and damaged me.

The symptoms are all there. I miss checking emails for a day, and I've been cut out from important information that needed to be acted upon, or at least reacted to. I have to leave my laptop online even if I'm watching a DVD in the privacy of my home, in case I get the urge to surf online for the bios of the actors or director of the film, before I get back to regular scheduled viewing.

I'm guilty of texting while driving. Hell, I can't even have cup of coffee or dinner with someone without having to lower my head to respond to the bleeping sound of an incoming text message, or pressing a button to answer a phone call. Same goes for the other party: I'm so used to sporadic alert tones and buzzes coming in on the other mobile, such that I've simple adapted with a momentary silence, in order for my companion to focus on that other, non-physically present companion.

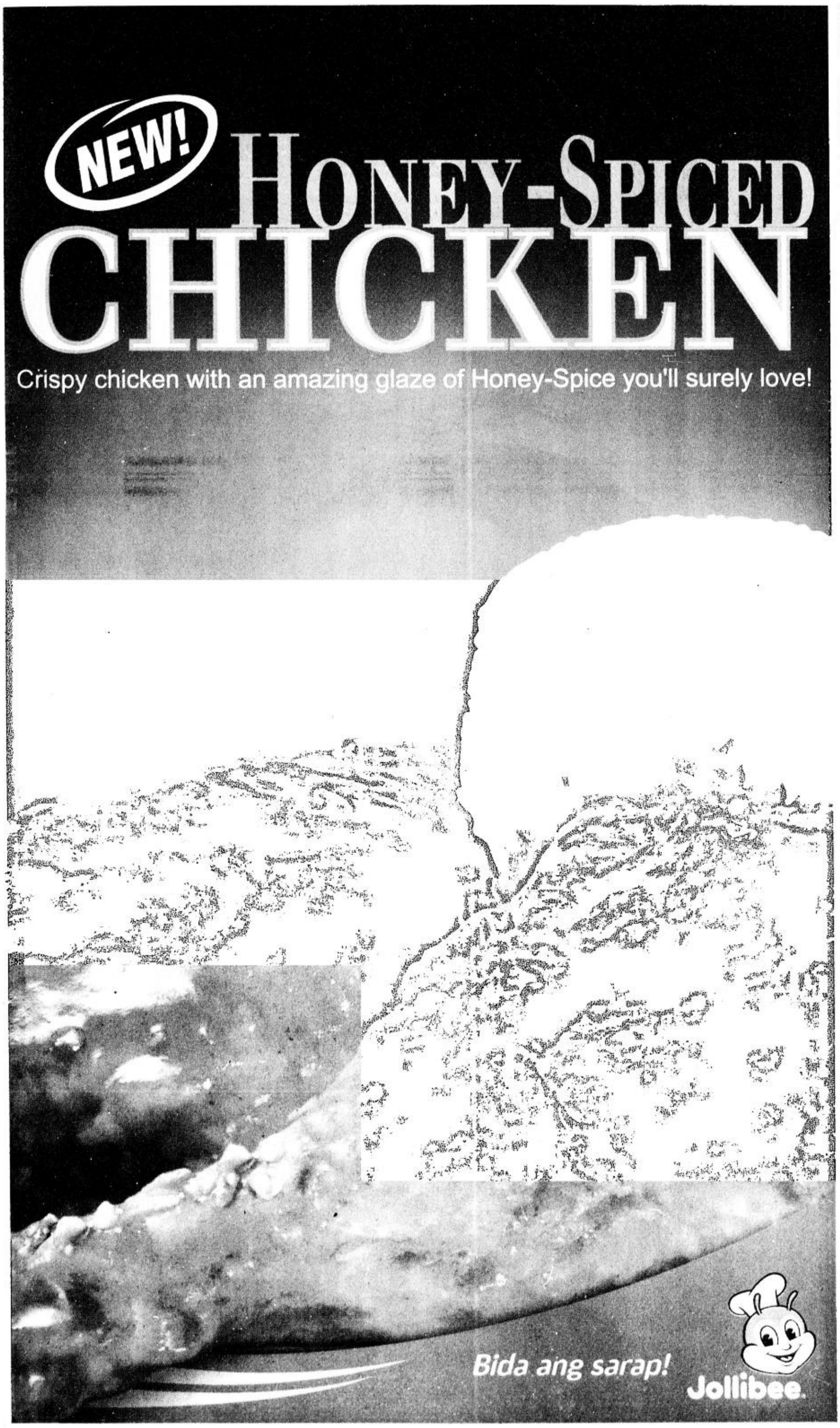
Instant chats (an activity I can engage in while simultaneously working or even writing this column) are testimonials of this CPA-bordering-on-ADD state. In a single hour, my friend on the other side of the chat window and I can flawlessly jump from topic to topic without even noticing the gaps. We could start out with plans of watching "Pirates of the Caribbean," but that would lead to nonlinear routes towards eternal Johnny Depp worship, the Rolling Stones, smoking cigarettes, France, the World Cup, Ronaldinho's burning effigies, South Africa, the high cost of living, being broke, and having no money then to watch a movie. Why, it's an MTV all over again! In fact, if one just got corresponding video clips of these seemingly unrelated topics from YouTube.com, and superimpose it with a trippy song, then I could compose my own MTV to relay the story of fractal minds.

Shut up, shut off

Research states that Continuous Partial Attention, in small doses, can actually be contributory to well-functioning behavior in the 00s, in the effort of filtering information to streamline responsibilities and ease relationships. But if it goes out of hand, meaning being in an always-on, anytime and anywhere state, it sets the person on high alert, and gives an "artificial sense of constant crisis." (I feel the stress already!) The irony drips: we are so connected that we're disconnected; we are so reachable that we've become unreachable.

What to do about it? Well, the brave soul must learn the art of shutting off. At least sometimes. Some companies have instituted "no email Fridays" (the modern "casual Friday") in order to revisit the value of interpersonal communication. Some CEOs have even required their employees to disarm themselves of all cellphones (yikes!), laptops, and Blackberrys, if only to be able to block out The Network, and be able to tune in to the real, living moment.

Imagine that, not being a Pavlov's lapdog to a beep, a ring, a flickering icon on a screen! That means having full, undivided attention! Welcome, Googlite, to the wonderful, surreal state of disconnect. It's a whole new level of paranoia!



Super 2
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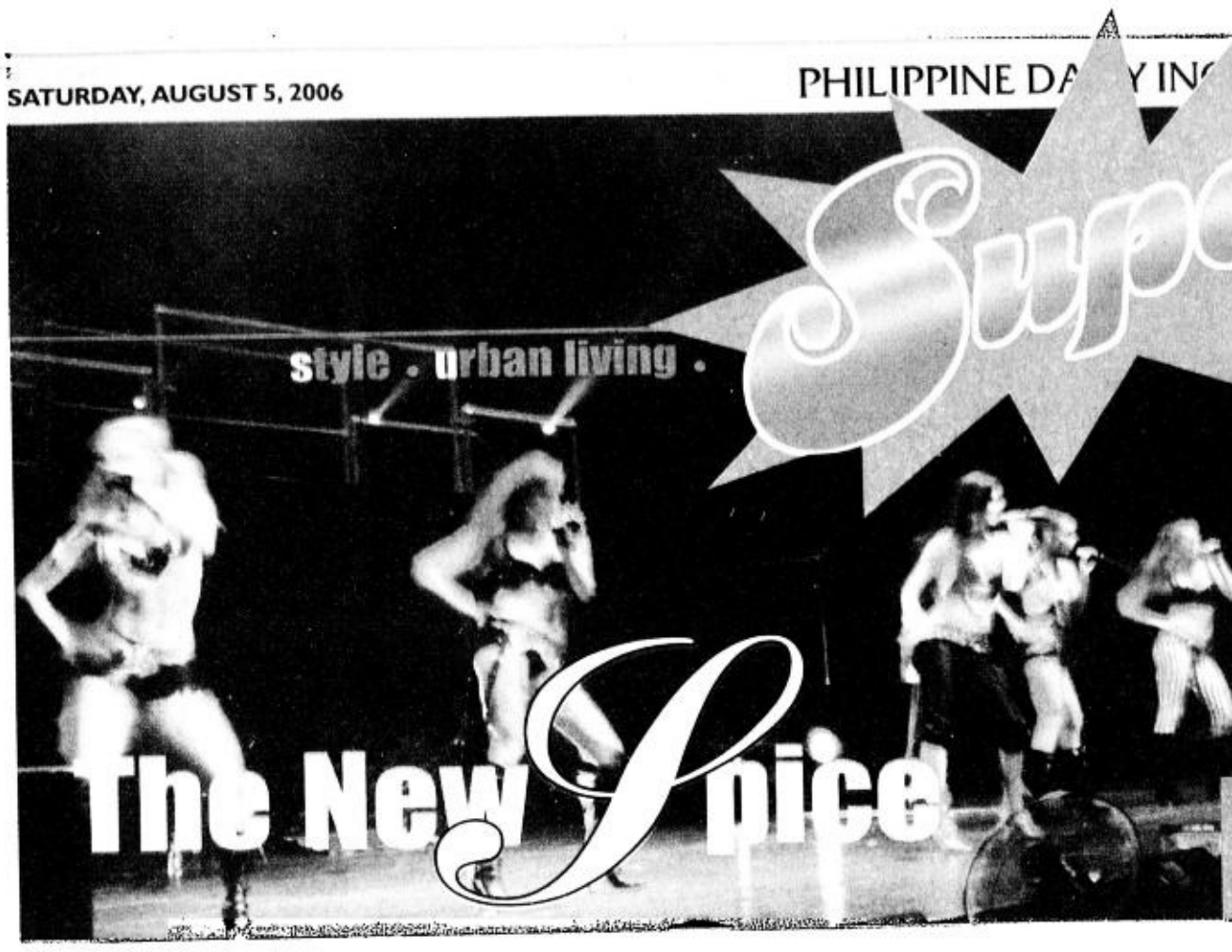
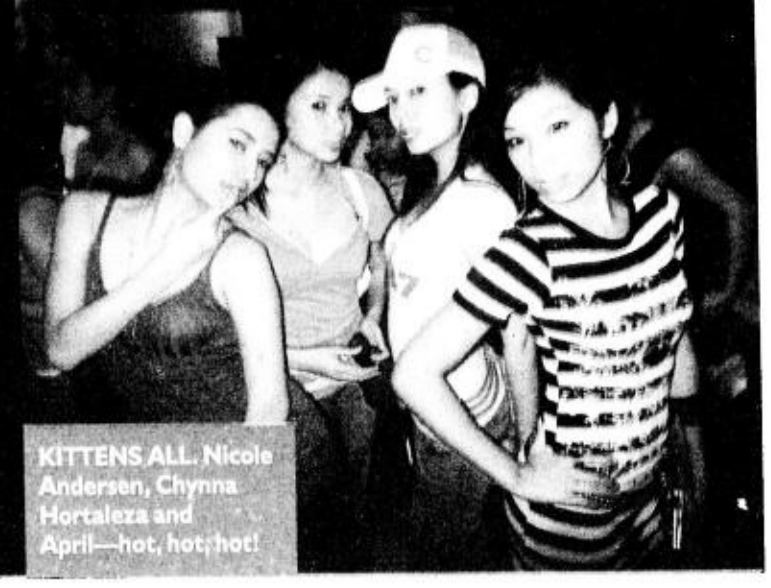
The New Spice



DONTCHA wish your girlfriends were as hot as them?



KITTENS ALL. Nicole Andersen, Chynna Hortaleza and April—hot, hot, hot!

Tim Yap

HOT LIKE ME!" THE LEFT side of the Araneta Coliseum screamed in rebuttal against the opposite side of the fence when the crowd exclaimed that one word that sums up flirting culture of late, "Dontcha!"

Yes, we know we want them. Oh yes we do. Proof of it was the sold out concert last weekend of this generation's spiced glamazons, the Pussycat Dolls.

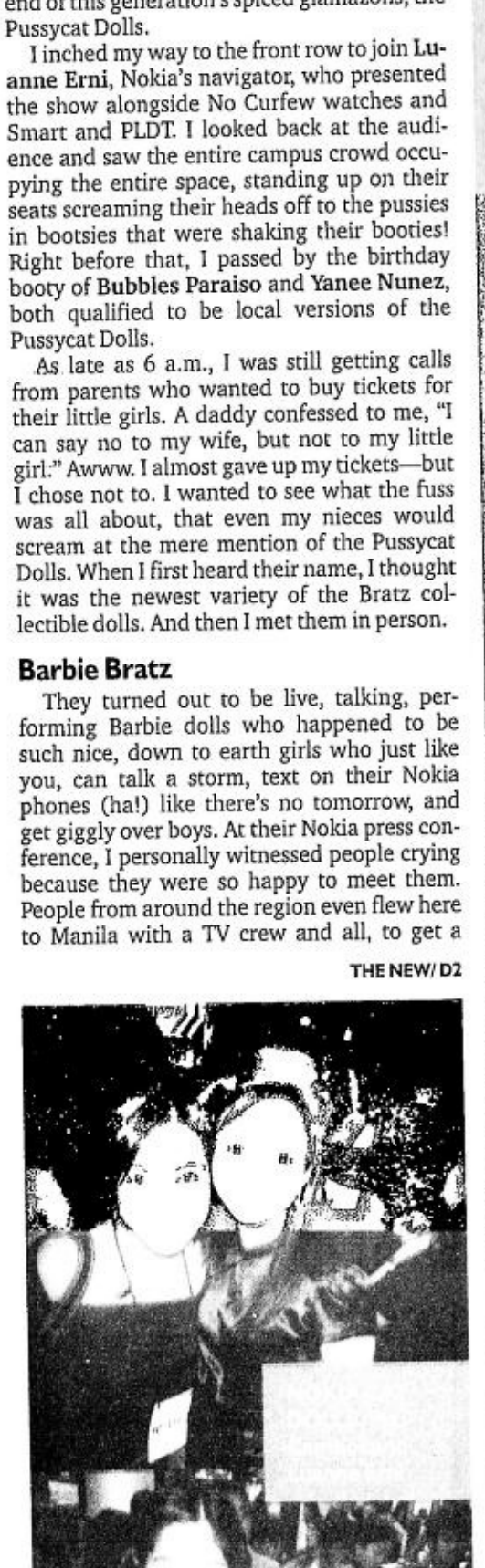
I inched my way to the front row to join **Luanne Erni**, Nokia's navigator, who presented the show alongside No Curfew watches and Smart and PLDT. I looked back at the audience and saw the entire campus crowd occupying the entire space, standing up on their seats screaming their heads off to the pussies in bootsies that were shaking their booties! Right before that, I passed by the birthday booty of **Bubbles Paraiso** and **Yanee Nunez**, both qualified to be local versions of the Pussycat Dolls.

As late as 6 a.m., I was still getting calls from parents who wanted to buy tickets for their little girls. A daddy confessed to me, "I can say no to my wife, but not to my little girl." Awww. I almost gave up my tickets—but I chose not to. I wanted to see what the fuss was all about, that even my nieces would scream at the mere mention of the Pussycat Dolls. When I first heard their name, I thought it was the newest variety of the Bratz collectible dolls. And then I met them in person.

Barbie Bratz

They turned out to be live, talking, performing Barbie dolls who happened to be such nice, down to earth girls who just like you, can talk a storm, text on their Nokia phones (ha!) like there's no tomorrow, and get giggly over boys. At their Nokia press conference, I personally witnessed people crying because they were so happy to meet them. People from around the region even flew here to Manila with a TV crew and all, to get a

THE NEW/ D2



MY BACK VIEW of the Pussycat Dolls concert

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SMART 30

SUPER! SELECTION

What's better than free miles?

By Pepe Diokno

I LOVE FREE STUFF. I MEAN, who doesn't? But then, I love free stuff so much I celebrate over the free meal you might get when your flight gets delayed. Or free hotel breakfasts. And ... I have just revealed more about my personality than I should. Anyway, I say this because you need to imagine how ecstatic I get flying with Singapore Airlines.

Some of you have just come back from the great sales in Singapore and Malaysia or the Coldplay concerts. I have two things to say to you: One, you're lucky people. Two, if you flew back in with one of Singapore Airlines' three daily flights to Manila, I hope you didn't throw your boarding pass away. See, Singapore Air boarding passes give you tons of free stuff—from discounts at The Podium, to free buffets, to 50% off hotel accommodations. (Again, you're lucky people.)

Hi, Hyatt!

Now, if you still have your boarding pass, and it's less than a week old, I suggest you troop over to the Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila. Right away. You'll get 500 bonus KrisFlyer miles; Hyatt will slash 50% off published room rates for you, give you a coupon to the Casino, and a discount to their Spa at Club Oasis.

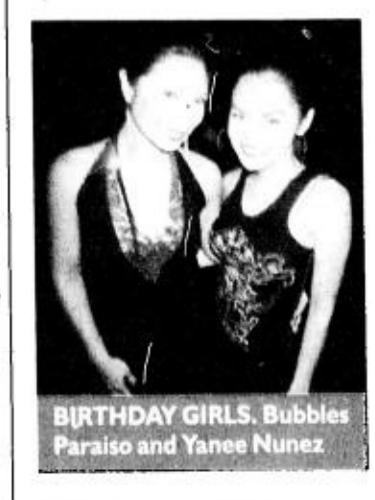
There isn't a better way to enjoy a five-star hotel and casino than enjoying it without having to spend a lot of money. Let's just hope you don't get lost and spend all your money in their casino, which is the largest hotel gaming facility in the country. Remember that.

And, if you have been deprived all your life, and the free stuff from Hyatt isn't enough, it's OK. Singapore Airlines has partnered with 72 other establishments in Manila alone. Take that number and add the number of establishments SIA has partnered with in Singapore, Australia, Bali, Dubai, Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Vietnam ... and you might have the equivalent of the amount of rain that's covered the country in cubic meters squared.

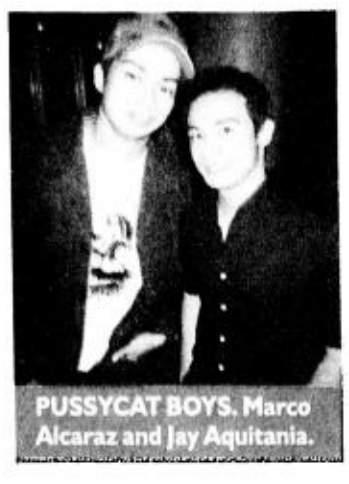
Here's more good news to those who don't have their boarding passes yet: SIA's Boarding Pass Privileges Program comes with all types of boarding passes—Economy, Raffles, and First class. So, pretend you're on Amazing Race Asia and fly out now. We don't want you here!

Go to http://singaporeair.com/boardingpass for the complete list of Singapore Airlines' Boarding Pass Privileges Program's participating establishments and their offers.

Flash your boarding pass at the Hyatt Hotel and Casino Manila. Contact (632) 245-1234, and visit http://manila.casino.hyatt.com.



BIRTHDAY GIRLS. Bubbles Paraiso and Yanee Nunez



PUSSYCAT BOYS. Marco Alcaraz and Jay Aquitania.

The New Spice

From page D1

glimpse of these singing and dancing kitties.

The sure sign that you are living in this day and age is that when you look around the concert floor, you see Nokias of all shapes and sizes flashing toward the direction of the stage. That makes lighters so—light years ago. Talking about light years, when the Pussycat Dolls sang the classic "Sway," the audience just stared at them like it's the newest song to hit the airwaves—as in, they had no idea.

The same time I was talking about the concert, my friends were going crazy over **Hilary** and **Hallie Duff**'s newest rendition of "Material Girl." It begins with a Lalalala melody before they sing the iconic lyrics (which, of course, to the new generation not familiar with the original material girl, this version will be entirely new), "Boys may come and boys may go, but that's all right with me!" With Hilary and Hallie's strong tween following, this is bound to be the next big hit.

One thought entered my mind. If the girls these days have songs like "Dontcha" and "Material Girl" as anthems, what will happen to the next generation of 2bu!-Candy-Meg-Pink readers? Just recently, I got shocked when this lass I used to baby sit abroad was now dancing on the ledge of Embassy! I made sure to guard this lassie against guys who started to hit on her (to the delight of her parents—that's why they trust her in my company, hehe). Oh well, I trust

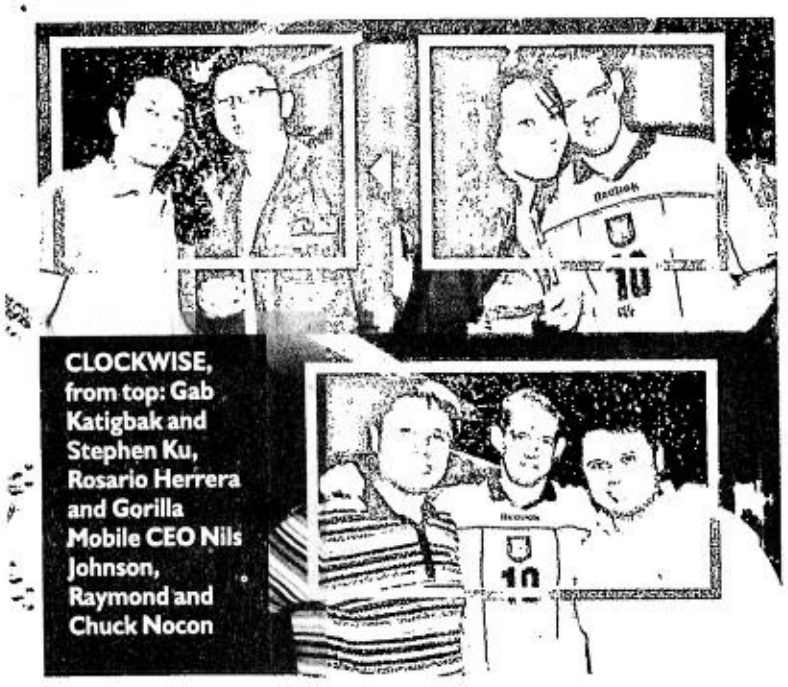
that the kidults now (that's you and me) know how to value the freedom that they have, and not waste it on mindless indulgences (I'm one to talk—but hey, I'm an adult now) and utilize it for higher learning. Dontcha!

Francophiles

For those who wish to study in France, check out EduFrance's activity on Saturday at the Alliance Francaise de Manille on Nicanor Garcia Street in Makati. Starting from 2 p.m., attend workshops to be given by designer **Lulu Tan Gan** and **Alfred Madhavy** from Mod'Art International in Paris. **Kate Torralba** flaunts her designs to be modeled by show biz celebrities while you guys sign up for higher learning (like what I mentioned earlier) while enjoying the cocktails at the Alliance lobby. Now what would be better than that? Dontcha think?

Panic at the disco

Aryty Party



CLOCKWISE, from top: Gab Katigbak and Stephen Ku, Rosario Herrera and Gorilla Mobile CEO Nils Johnson, Raymond and Chuck Nocon

ARYTY PARTIED THE NIGHT away as New York-based Gorilla Mobile main man Nils Johnson hosted a hip Aryty party in Embassy. Manila's trendy party crowd was in high spirits as DJ Jon Herrera provided R&B tunes all night long. This intimate gathering was to celebrate the launch of Aryty Philippine and its partnership with Friendster, the biggest social networking page in the Philippines.

Aryty, pronounced "all righty," launched its SMS-based, overseas load service last month and it met rave reviews. The service saves your loved ones time and money when they want to send a little load back home. Aryty makes it possible to transfer load to any major carrier in the Philippines through SMS or the Internet.

Great for the social networking pro and newbie alike, the Aryty A-List is a free and customizable module that goes right on your Friendster page. Tailor your A-List module to reflect your personal style. Aryty lets you choose the color, theme and write a headline. The Aryty A-List puts powerful tools in a simple framework so you can get load fast.

With over 2.4 million Filipinos living in the USA alone, there is great demand to stay connected with friends and family who are far away. Keep your eyes open for more Aryty news!

Visit Aryty.com.ph to learn more and get your own A-List.

Cinemalaya films spread to UP Diliman

THE MOST SUPER! INDEpendent films are moving from CCP to the University of the Philippines in Diliman. Catch all the Cinemalaya films you didn't get to see—and those you want to see twice more—from Aug. 7 to 10 at the UP Film Institute.

If you're uninitiated, the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival is one of the biggest festivals in the country. It gives grants to cream-of-the-crop full-length feature films, and a huge stage for top short films to be shown. It's where fresh talent is discovered, and where some of the country's best stories are told.

The full length films are "Tulad ng Dati" by Mike Sandejas, which is about rock band, "The Dawn," Ron Bryant's "Rotonda" which follows a marked P1,000 bill through a path tainted with blood, and "In Da Red Korner" by Dado Lumibao, a film about the preparations of a female boxer hungry for glory. "Batad: Sa Paang Palay" by Benji Garcia and Vic Acedillo is about a 14-year old Batad boy who is obsessed with owning a pair of rubber shoes, while Nick Olanka's "Ang Huling Araw ng Linggo" follows seven individuals who are given a day to solve their problems. "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness" by Florida Bautista tells of a 50-year old man in search of happiness (of course), Arah Badayos' and Margaret Guzman's "Mudraks" centers on a mother whose world changes when she opens her daughter's diaries, and "Donsol" by Adolfo Alix tells of love and getting lost in a sea of emotions.

The ten short films have been divided into two programs. Program I includes Milo's "Orasyon," a film about a religious widow's vulnerabilities and how they are stirred with the arrival of a new housemaid, "Parang Pelikula" by Hubert Tibi, which follows a young man in his return to his neighborhood to attend his childhood playmate's funeral, and "Putot" by Jeck Cogama, which is about a young boy who struggles to make ends meet at a squatter colony by the sea. "Puwang" by Sunshine Matutina is about the death of a father and its effects on the relationship of three siblings, while Reinzi Balao's "Sa Silaw" is about a woman who is a preacher by day and a prostitute by night.

Program II consists of Reggie Gulle's "10:25 Ng Gabi," a film about the collision of two extremely different lives, "Gee-Gee at Waterina" by Dennis Teodosio, which centers on the conflict inside Waterina "the comfort gay" as he gets a check for his life story, and "Kwarto" by Noel Taylo, which focuses on the sexual tension between four friends as they drink inside a room. "Labada" by Raz de la Torre is about a household helper whose life is rocked by suspicions her husband is having an affair, while Jeanne Lim and Pepe Diokno's "No Passport Needed" is a darkly comic story about a fugitive who finds a businessman willing to sneak him into Malaysia, with a catch of course.

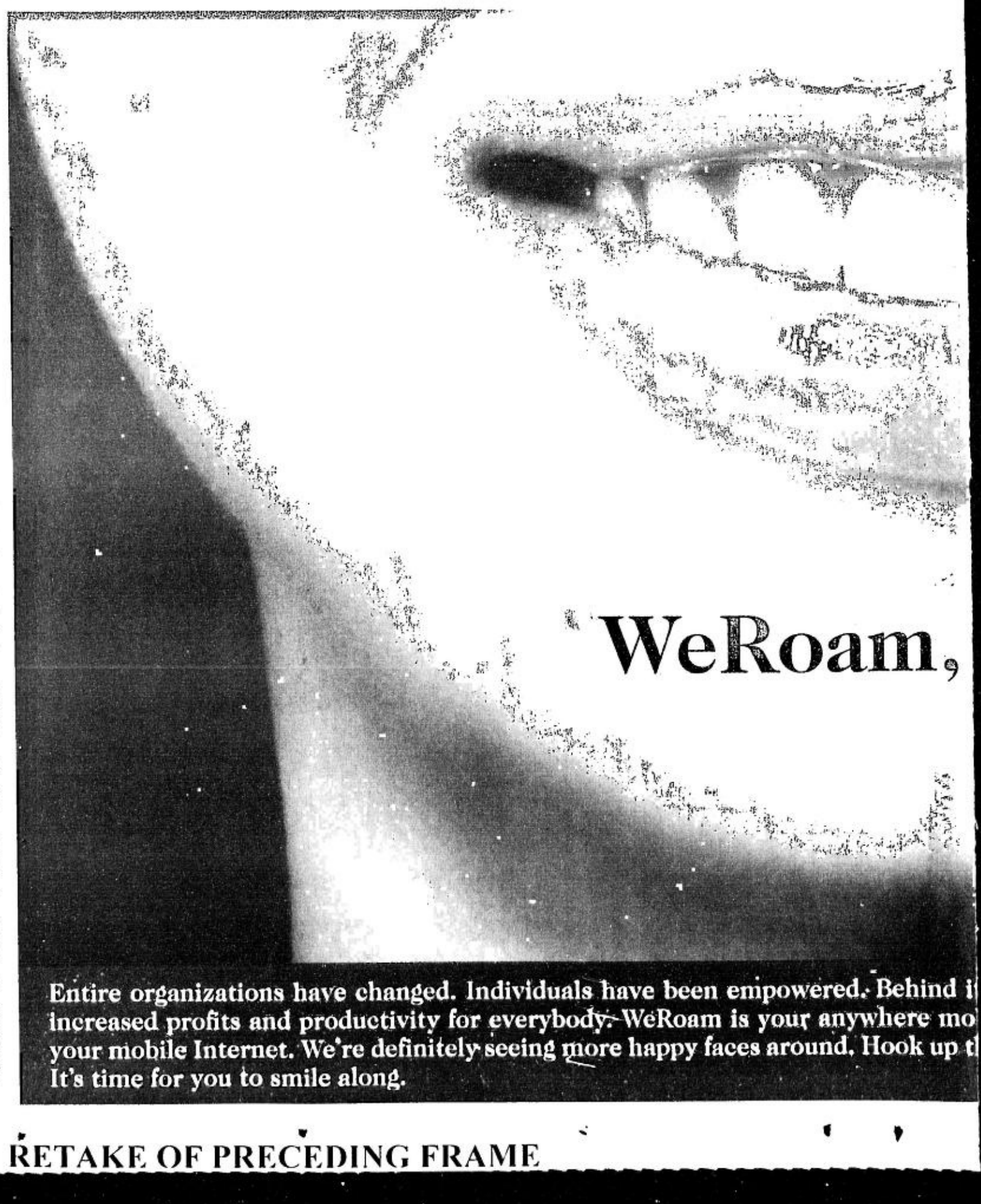
The run starts on Monday, Aug. 7, with four award-winning shorts at 2 p.m., "Rotonda" at 5 p.m., "Mudraks" at 7 p.m. and Shorts (Program I) at 9 p.m.

On Aug. 8, there's "Batad" at 2 p.m., "Tulad ng Dati" at 5 p.m., "In Da Red Corner" at 7 p.m. and "Donsol" at 9 p.m.

The screenings on Aug. 9 are Shorts (Program II) at 2 p.m., the four award-winning shorts at 5 p.m., "Donsol at 7 p.m., and "Rotonda" at 9 p.m.

Aug. 10 offerings are "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness" at 2 p.m., "Ang Huling Araw ng Linggo" at 5 p.m., "Batad" at 7 p.m., and "Tulad ng Dati" at 9 p.m.

Tickets to the screenings are P50 each, and are available at the UP Film Institute box office. For more information, please send a message to cinemalaya2006@yahoo.com.



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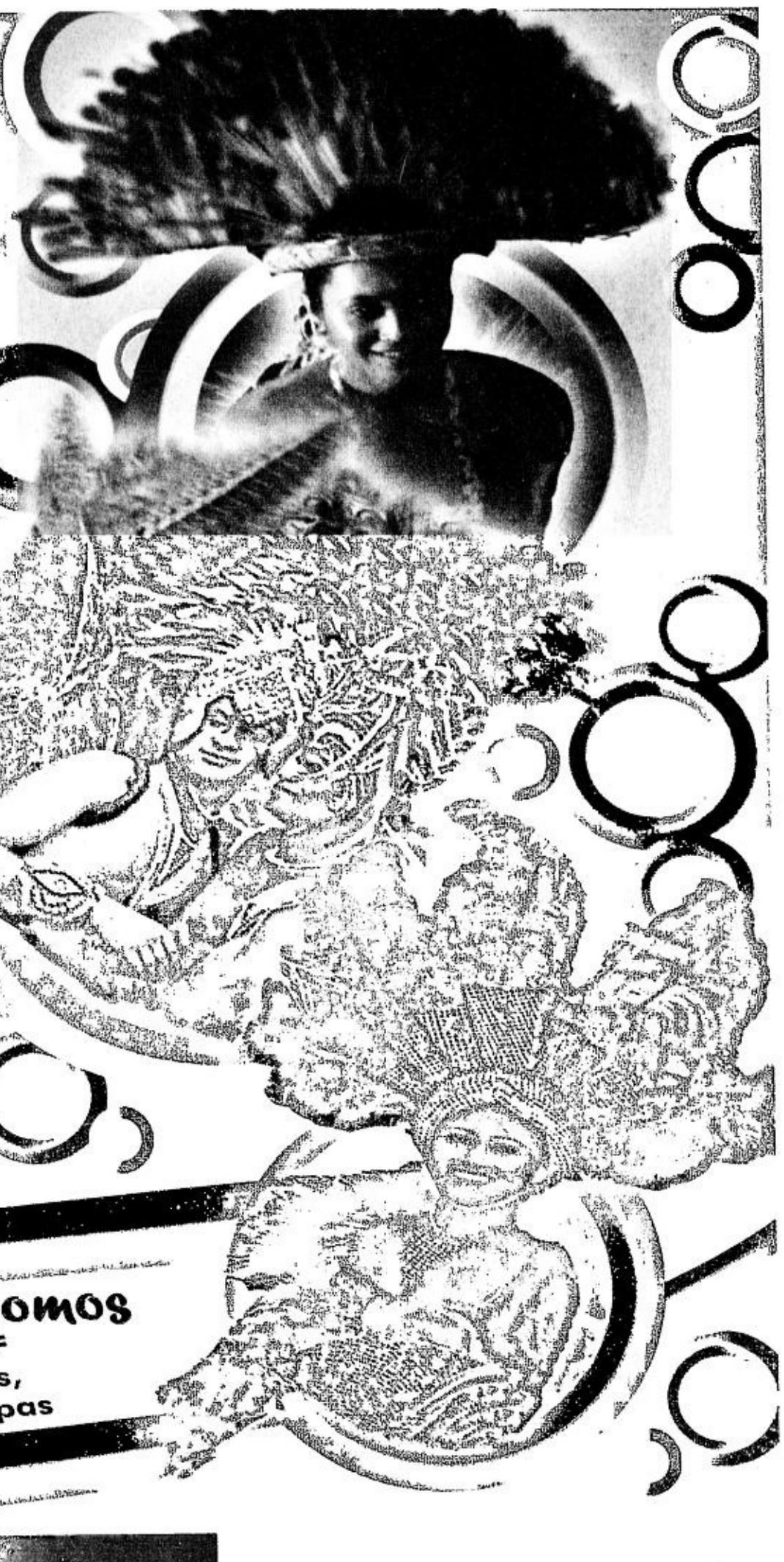

Program of Activities:

August 18, 2006

10am	Motorcade in Olongapo City
4pm	Assembly Time for the Parade-Timesquare
5pm	Gay Parade (Waterfront Road)
7pm onwards	SUBIC BAY PRIDE '06 *Street Party @ the Boardwalk* AVP Strip Fashion Show Impersonators' Production Number Onda Latina Band Brown Outfit Bureau Pier One Bands

August 19, 2006

8pm	*Street Party @ Waterfront Road* Oldies but Goodies Band Flintstones and the Gang Band Sibil Hottest Babes Ledge Dancing Competition DJ from Manila Pier One Bands ***Special Feature: Mud Wrestling***

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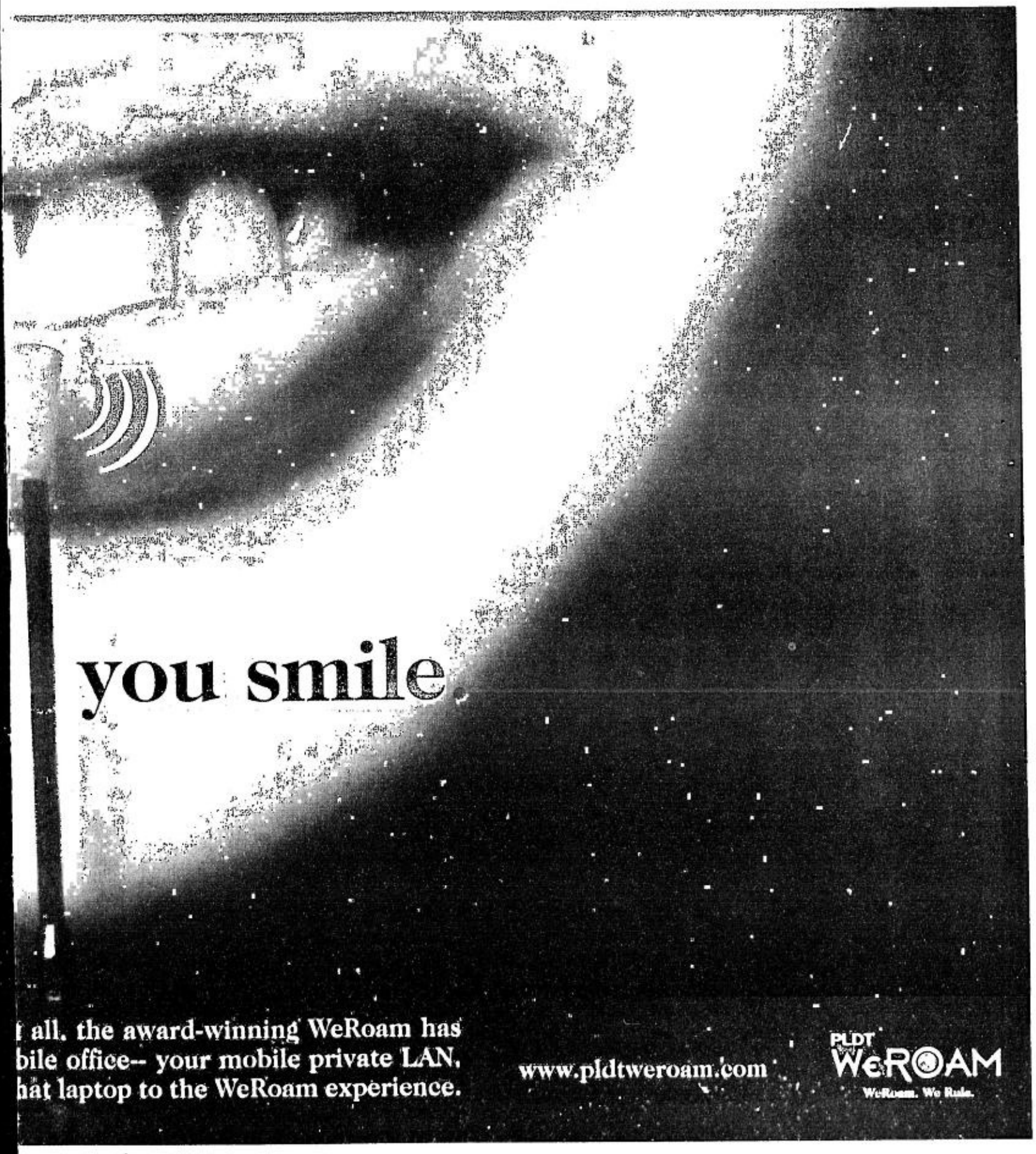

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LGF, Main Bldg., SM City

CHICCO EASTWOOD
2/F Eastwood City Walk 2, Libis, QC

CHICCO ROCKWELL
3rd/Flr., Power Plant Mall, Makati

CHICCO GLORIETTA II
2nd Level, Ayala Ctr., Makati

CHICCO FESTIVAL MALL
3rd Level, Festival Supermall, Alabang

Step 5: To earn a reward, customer must purchase at least 2 product categories that correspond to a certain amount. The higher the total amount of purchase, the higher the value of rewards. Promo starts April 15 up to September 15, 2006. See flyers for details or email us at mktg@rockwell.net or fax us at 743-1004

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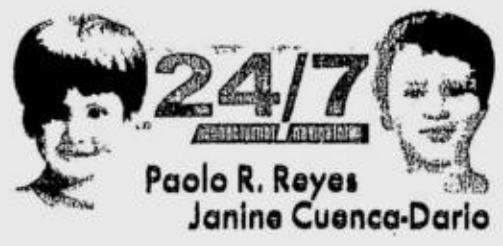
Music and Mayhem



DON'T LET THE RAINY SEASON'S pesky downpours dampen your spirit. From free-for-all liquor spills to head bangin' rock shebangs, your lingering phobia of the drenched outdoors should be cured with a medicinal dose of musical mayhem.

Regal Revelry The carnivalesque mix of deep house music, digital motion graphics, and funky modern art is bound to create revelrous mayhem at the cavernous halls of the Embassy Super Club [The Fort, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, phone: 816-4199]. Tonight at 10 p.m., get ready to roll the red carpet for the "Chivas Life New York" party trio: DJ Stewart (globe-trotting Trip Hop and Breakbeat dynamo), VJ DSK (the innovative techno-visualist from Tokyo), and Jean Pierre Brown (unique New York-based artist with a penchant for live painting).

Hit the road, Jack According to the gospel of Jack (Daniels), good old fashion fun is defined as good music, good company, and a truckload of great whiskey. Next Friday, Aug. 11, at the Fort Plaza, the "Friends of Jack" party (hosted by Super!'s own Tim Yap) promises to supply copious amounts of all three ... as long as you provide the good vibe. Take a load off and unwind to the music of Sound, Up Dharma Down, Mike's Apartment, and BBC's DJ Mike Constantino. Call 0917-7917485.

Rock on, Manila! Die-hard fans of the hit reality TV show, "Rock Star: INXS," will be happy to hear that winner JD Fortune and finalist MiG Ayesa will be reunited in one-night only concert. No, not for some schmaltzy "Rock Star" reunion in Middle America. The legendary Aussie rock group will swing by the Araneta Coliseum on Aug. 15 for the INXS: Switch World Tour, with none other than Filipino-Australian MiG as the show's opening act. Tickets with reserved seating are priced at P2625, P3675, and P4725. Call 911-5555 or visit ticketnet.com.ph.

Other Super! 24/7 events:

Aug. 5, Saturday Chivas Life New York at Embassy Club; DLSU's Addiction: Fashion Show & DJs at Citrus; Coffee Break Island at 70s Bistro; Silk at Shang Streetscape; Jean Sibelius Concert at St. Scholatica's Manila; Ogie Alcasid at Aliw Theater; Sabina & Why Women Wash The Dishes at Merk's; Urban Groove: R&B Night at Citrus; The Weekender with DJs Paolo Maralit and Cao Ocampo at Jill's; Bringin' Back the Bounce with DJ Marie Garcia at Mati; Party On! with DJ Buddha & JD at Absinth; Salsa Night at Ricco-Renzo Café; House Groovin' at Mezze; Sleepless with DJ Martin Pulgar at Embassy Club; Campusition Night at Mag:net Café; DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple; Soundsgood DJs at Embassy Cuisine; Wham Bam with DJ Bam del Valle at Government; Soulistic with DJs Scratchmark & Shorty at Prince of Jaipur; Massive Saturdays at Bed

Aug. 6, Sunday AAI's Death and the Maiden at Carlos Romulo Theater; Pianist Teresa Avila at Tivoli; Champagne Lunch at Paseo Uno (Mandarin Oriental); Jay Ticar exhibit at UP Vargas Museum; Champagne Brunch at Spiral (Hotel Phil. Plaza); Tony Twigg exhibit at UP Vargas Museum

Aug. 7, Monday Independent Film Makers Night at 70s Bistro; CanU DIGGIT? at Absinth; I Don't Like Mondays! with DJ Ro at Gweilos Makati; Silk & Steel at Merk's ; Eastwind Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar; Follies de Mwah at Club Mwah

Aug. 8, Tuesday Cuisine Royale with Manolet Dario at Embassy Cuisine; Panic with DJ Alessandra Tinio at Zen; Sex & the City Ladies Night at Mezze; Sparkle with DJs Patch & Erwin Edralin at Absinth; Kickback Tuesdays at Manila DJ Club; Two Rooms at Citrus; Italian Film Festival at CCP; Guarana at Café Havana Greenbelt; Spirit of '67 at Captain's Bar; Aretha & Souled Out at Merk's

Aug. 9, Wednesday Grand Re-opening Party at Temple; Wunjo at 70s Bistro; Weekend Wednesdays with DJ Boyet Almazan at Strumm's; Smooth with DJ Steve Mills at Absinth; Discotech with DJ Papi Santos at Mezze; DJs Karl Ty & Cao Ocampo at Embassy Cuisine; Enchanted Evenings with Concertino at Azzurro Linden Suites; Funksouljah at Manila DJ Club; Birthday Bash at Citrus; DJs Mars Miranda & Johnyverse at Embassy Club; Stereo Therapy at Embassy VIP Room; Willy Wanka's Music Factory with Joffy Cruz at Gweilos Makati; House Night with GP Reyes at Temple; DJ Brit at Government; Double Happiness at Prince of Jaipur; Way Back Wednesdays at Bed; Jazz Night at Mag:net Café; Julia Duncan at Merk's

Aug. 10, Thursday German Silent Film Festival with Radioactive Sago Project at SM Megamall Cinema 1; Itchyworms & Private Sanctuary at 70s Bistro; Coup with Manolet Dario at Fiamma; Reggae Night at 6Underground; DJ Elian at Nuvo; Sweet Suite Soul at Sake Lab; GottaHaveHouse! at Capone's; G Lounge at Mezze; Pure Latin with DJ Arnel at Prince of Jaipur; Fluxxe Thursdays at Absinth; Supahstar DJ Thursdaze at Bed; DJ Badboy Jeff at Temple; Acoustic Jive at Merk's

Aug. 11, Friday Simply Sitti: The Bossa Nova Babe Live in Concert! at Music Museum; Limited Edition at Shang Streetscape; Decadance with Boyet Almazan at Jill's; Sunshine with DJs Patch & Mon Maramba at Absinth; Blue Room with DJs JP Sacaben & Nix Pernia at Azzurro Linden Suites; Style with Steve Mills at Citrus; Disco Mania at MDC Greenhills; Got House at Mezze; DJ Owens Sun at Embassy Club; HouseBeats at Mati; MyHOUSE at M Café; DJ Marie Garcia at Embassy Cuisine; Happy Yummy with DJ Brit at Government; Jive with DJs Darrel & McDash at Temple; The Jerks at 70s Bistro; Route 70 at Merk's; Takeover with DJs Scratchmark & Bliss at Prince of Jaipur; Kuh Ledesma at Captain's Bar

Schedules may change without prior notice. For more information and a complete listing of events, text 24/7 through your mobile phone and send to 2949 (Globe) and 209 (Smart). Log on to mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 NOCTURNAL NAVIGATOR at bars and restaurants around the city. Submit your schedules before Wednesday to events@mag24-7.com and mag24_7@yahoo.com.

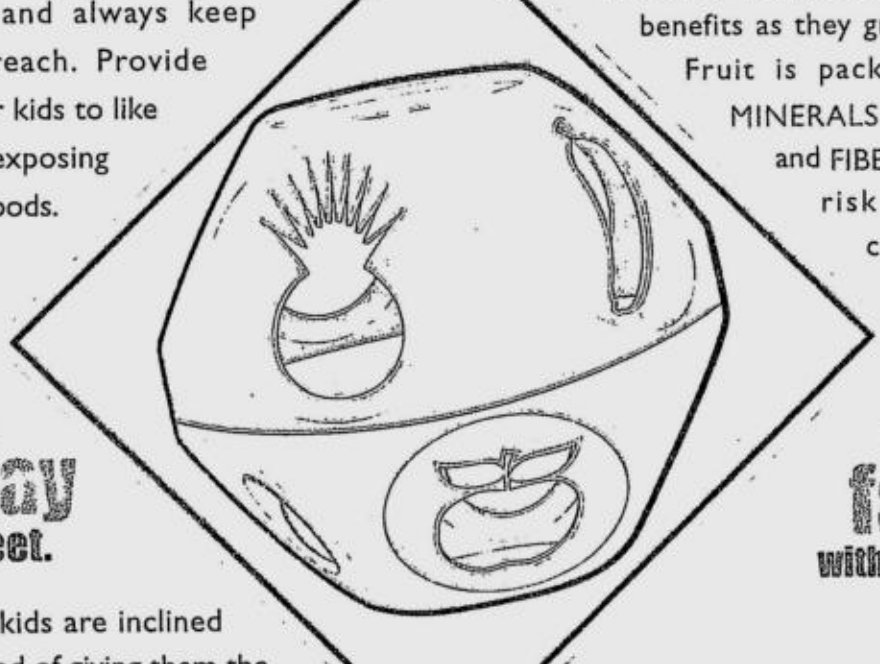
Squeezing In The Twice-A-Day Habit

Healthy eating habits are formed in childhood.

You have a big influence on what your children eat. Develop the habit of eating fruit by making it your family's snack of choice. You can choose to be a role model for healthy eating and always keep fruits within easy reach. Provide opportunities for your kids to like a variety of fruits by exposing them more to these foods.

Nutrition experts recommend at least 2 servings of real fruit or fruit juice everyday for a healthier life. Have them take two everyday. Let's break that down... One solid serving would be a half cup of canned fruit. If you want them to drink it, 3/4 cup of 100% fruit juice is also equal to 1 serving. Two servings a day provide the much needed vitamins and minerals to boost their immune system to help fight common infections. Remember, a healthy child performs better in school and at play.

This early fruit habit also has lasting health benefits as they grow older. Del Monte Fruit is packed with VITAMINS, MINERALS, PHYTOCHEMICALS and FIBER that help reduce the risk of illnesses from common infections to heart disease to certain cancers.



Enjoying fruits twice a day is sweet.

Patience mom. Most kids are inclined to sweetness, so instead of giving them the usual candies or chocolates, give them a taste of how sweet real fruits can be. Sooner or later, your kids will get accustomed to the fruits' sweetness. Fruits have the greatest range of texture... from the very soft, to ripe, and crunchy. They'll get more "bite" for a more engaging munching experience.

Don't worry, it won't take much to get them into the habit.

Make him familiar with fruit.

Here are a few tips to make the eating experience more fun and exciting: Make fruity ice candies. Top pancakes with fruit cocktail. Do fruit-flavored milk shakes. Make edible fruit art such as creative kebabs. Bake cakes with fruity toppings.

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Editor **Nestor U. Torre**
Assistant Editor **Rito P. Asilo**

Susan Roces is feisty, fun in comeback sitcom

By Nestor U. Torre

WE MADE IT A POINT TO CATCH the premiere telecast of the new Channel 2 sitcom, "John En Shirley," last Saturday, July 29, because its stellar cast (Dolphy, Susan Roces, Maricel Soriano) comprised an appealing viewing proposition.

In the new sitcom, John moves in with his daughter Shirley's family and has to interact with his *balae*, Susan (Encarnacion) and her hubby (Noel Trinidad).

They start off well enough, but "En" slowly but surely reveals her domineering, nagging nature, making John recall (with a shudder) his former *balae*, the hyper-bossy *Doña* Delilah (portrayed in the original "John and Marsha" sitcom by Dely Atay-atayan).

Initial telecast

At the end of last week's initial telecast, we found ourselves appreciating Susan Roces' sprightly, feisty performance, and Dolphy's hardworking if efforted portrayal.

Also an asset to the show is the child actor who plays Shirley's son. And the show should be credited for casting as Shirley's daughter a child actress who looks like a young Maricel Soriano.

On the other hand, Maricel's performance in "John En Shirley" is too similar to her past ack-ack, motormouth portrayals to be freshly diverting. As years pass, performers should develop and expand their range of abilities and acting styles.

Yes, Maricel's character in "John En Shirley" is the same as the girl she played in the original sitcom, but

ROCES. Sprightly performance.

Shirley is a business executive now, so the motormouth attack needs to be modulated and replaced with other, similarly diverting factors.

Wider range

Also doing less than his share to keep the new show entertaining is Vandolph, who plays Shirley's shiftless younger brother. The actor's aw-shucks acting style is too limited to be consistently entertaining, so he should opt for a wider range.

In other words, the rule for the show's veteran actors is: Don't rest on past success, because a new show—and its potential viewers—require a fresh approach.

Take Noel Trinidad. In this show, he plays a relatively new character: A henpecked husband who's voluble when he talks to others, but is a man of very few words when he's in the domineering presence of his wife, En.

Minor adjustment

That may be a relatively minor adjustment, but it's a welcome one because it indicates that the actor is thinking, changing, creating, improving—and not taking his success for granted.

Now that television has become ultra-competitive and shows are much more expensive to produce, talents need to work harder to turn their shows into hits.

Sure, the star appeal of the Dolphy-Susan-Maricel troika is initially powerful, but they have to keep the creative momentum up, or else their new show's initial high "curiosity" ratings could taper off after some weeks.

Principal characters

Aside from stellar performances, the sitcom's storylines should also be firmed up. On its pilot episode, it was understandable that the show pretty much limited itself to divertingly introducing its principal characters and their interrelationships.

In subsequent episodes, however, it would be good to see strong plotlines and interesting character relationships.

We trust that "John En Shirley" can keep to this upward trajectory, and we wish the new show the best. Fact is, on TV these days, a program can do nothing less.

"Night or day, I can call any branch of Gerry's Grill including one in Union City, California.

Buti na lang the lines are clear for local and IDD calls kasi ang O.C. ko when I check on operations."

Sonia V. Reducindo
Director of Operations
Gerry's Grill

Sonia checks on 21 branches anytime. And she can stay on her Sun phone extensively monitoring stock inventory and nerve-wracking set-ups for emergency banquets. In one case, a very demanding client ordered dinner for 100 heads in an hour's notice. The rush 7-course meal turned out to be a huge success. All coordination was done by phone since everyone in Sonia's team is equipped with Sun phones. Sun works well for this iron lady and her iron chefs.

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Seeing stars on Broadway

By Behn Cervantes

I WAS A MAGNET FOR CELEBRITIES when I was studying in New York in the '60s. I'd walk around and would soon notice a familiar, tall blonde figure traipsing in front of me. It was Troy Donahue, the Hollywood heartthrob who starred with Sandra Dee in a number of romantic movies.

One evening, while I was rushing to catch a show on the Great White Way, I noticed a short man with a distinctly familiar voice: Jack Klugman, the other half in television's popular show, "The Odd Couple."

REMICK. Wry humor.

Stern look

On another occasion, I heard an oh-so-familiar voice while walking in Manhattan's theater district. It belonged to a very tall woman wearing a large hat. I walked faster to take a peek at the face of the lady with the huge dark glasses.

It was "Hello Dolly" star, Carol Channing! When she saw me gawking at her, she gave me a stern look and said, "Hello"—to drive me away! I was so thrilled, because the Tony-winning actress was everything I expected her to be.

Celebrities

Running into celebrities became such a "habit." I was always at the right place and time.

One time, I was recounting those "meetings" to friends when—lo and behold!—I saw Anne Bancroft hailing a cab right in front of me!

In 1991, I was with a throng of fans who gathered by the backstage door of the theater where Noel Coward's "Private Lives" was being performed.

Glamorous vixen

We wanted to catch a glimpse of TV's glamorous vixen, Joan Collins, who was starring in the play. Then, I saw the star waving her hand and walking briskly through the crowd when the door finally opened.

"Hi!," I greeted Collins as she walked past me. "Hi!," she shot back instinctively. My companion ran to me and asked, "What did you tell her? And, what did she tell you?" I answered, "Oh, we just greeted each other," as though Joan and I were the oldest of friends.

Matinee

In 1965, when I watched Lee Remick in a matinee performance of "Wait Until Dark," I was, once more, a Backstage Johnny.

When she finally came out, the star of "The Days of Wine and Roses" kindly took time to sign autographs and chat with her fans.

A woman informed the actress that she had watched her in a musical with Angela Lansbury. Remick lightheartedly told the lady: "You're one of the few who did, then." I thought that frank statement spoke volumes about Remick's wry humor and personality.

In the '90s, as my friend and I were about to buy matinee tickets to "Glengarry Glen Ross," starring Jack Lemmon, Alec Baldwin and Al Pacino, we noticed a tight group of people rush past us.

Bodyguards

The taller men in the group were apparently bodyguards of the smaller fellow, whose profile I immediately recognized: Al Pacino—all 5'2 ½" of him!

He walked by so quickly that my frustrated companion didn't even see him.

My friend asked me, "Did you really see him?" "Yes, I did!," I exclaimed in delight, as the faces and voices of the other stars I had accidentally bumped into became a collage in my fan-tasticating mind!

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SUPERMAN RETURNS
7:00 PM 10:00PM
PREMIERE CINEMA
SUKOB
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
MIAMI VICE
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
1 MIAMI VICE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 ANT BULLY
4 TAMARA
5 SUKOB
6 JUST MY LUCK
PODIUM
CINEMA 1
MIAMI VICE
CINEMA 2
ANT BULLY
633-8976

SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 MIAMI VICE
2 SUKOB
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 TAMARA
9 CAVITE

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 MIAMI VICE
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 RESERVED
6 RESERVED
7 LADY IN THE WATER
8 WHITE LADY
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 SUKOB
11 THE BREAK-UP
12 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 CAVITE
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 THE BREAK-UP
6 SUKOB
7 MIAMI VICE
8 ANT BULLY
9 WHITE LADY
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 MIAMI VICE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 SUKOB
6 TAMARA
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 WHITE LADY
9 ANT BULLY
10 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 MIAMI VICE
2 ANT BULLY
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 THE BREAK-UP
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 SUKOB

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
THE BLOCK
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 SUKOB
6 ANT BULLY
7 MIAMI VICE
8 TAMARA
9 CAVITE
10 JUST MY LUCK
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
12 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 TAMARA
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 CAVITE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 ANT BULLY
6 MIAMI VICE
7 SUKOB
8 THE BREAK-UP
9 WHITE LADY
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY

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1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CHAOS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUKOB

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 MIAMI VICE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 ANT BULLY
6 SUKOB
7 WHITE LADY
8 SUPERMAN RETURNS

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 CHAOS
2 SUKOB
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 THE NUN

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUKOB
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 RV
4 LADY IN THE WATER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUKOB

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SUKOB
2 ANT BULLY
3 CAVITE
4 WHITE LADY
5 SUKOB
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3100
1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341205-06
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 LADY IN THE WATER

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LOVEWRECKED
5 CAVITE
6 SUKOB
7 SUKOB
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 RESERVED
3 SUKOB
4 UNITED 93
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 BATAS MILITAR
7 RESERVED
8 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 SUKOB
4 TAKE THE LEAD
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

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SUKOB 2:55 / 3:05 / 5:15 / 7:25 / 9:35	WOLF CREEK 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 9:50	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50	
DOLBY DIGITAL EX	JUST MY LUCK 2:15 / 4:45 / 7:15 / 9:45	THE BREAK - UP 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	ANT BULLY 11:30 / 1:45 / 4:00 MIAMI VICE 6:00 / 9:00

ANIMALL 5

MIAMI VICE 12:05 R4 / 2:05 / 5:05 / 8:05	ANT BULLY 12:55 / 3:10 / 5:25 / 7:40	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:10 R3 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30
SUKOB 12:10 R2 / 2:00 / 4:10 / 6:20 / 8:30	WOLF CREEK 2:05 R3 / 1:40 / 3:55 / 6:10 / 8:25	DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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Visceral thrills in 'Wolf Creek'

From page E4

based his hair-raising performance as the seemingly genial Outback bloke, Mick Taylor, on them.

Nathan Phillips, Cassandra Magrath, and Kestie Morassi play the real-life Ben Mitchell, Liz Hunter, and Kristy Earl, respectively—three twentysomething road-trippers whose fate you wouldn't want to share.

The movie starts out slowly. Nothing, in fact, really happens during the first half. This is probably deliberate, since the more we become acquainted with the three likeable characters and their vagabond backpacker lifestyle, the less we want to see them hurt.

Fast-paced

The second half of the film, however, is as tight and fast-paced as the first half was unhurried. Then, things start happening, and the tension and violence escalate to almost unbearable proportions (people were said to have walked out during the film's Sundance screening, but we *Pinoys* have stronger stomachs).

Filmed crisply and clearly, the movie makes use of the desolate Outback vistas to project fear, menace, and the onset of doom.

Sense of isolation

Even in the beginning, when the three victims are partying by the beach, the sense of isolation is all-pervading. And with the use of handheld cameras, the action becomes even more intimate and real.

You cannot dismiss it, because it has been compacted down to your size. The strength of the impact can be shocking.

In truth, there isn't as much gore here as there is in other slasher films, but you will recoil at every drop of blood that is spilled in "Wolf Creek."

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CINEMA 3 — MIAMI VICE 11:05 , 2:00 , 4:50 7:40 , 10:35 R13
CINEMA 4 — MIAMI VICE 10:35 , 1:25 , 4:15 7:05 , 10:00 R13
CINEMA 5 — ANT BULLY 10:45 , 1:05 , 3:20 5:35 , 7:50 , 10:10 GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM		
AUG. 4 , 2006	GLADYS GUEVARRA	9:00PM
AUG. 11 , 2006	Simply SITTI	9:00PM

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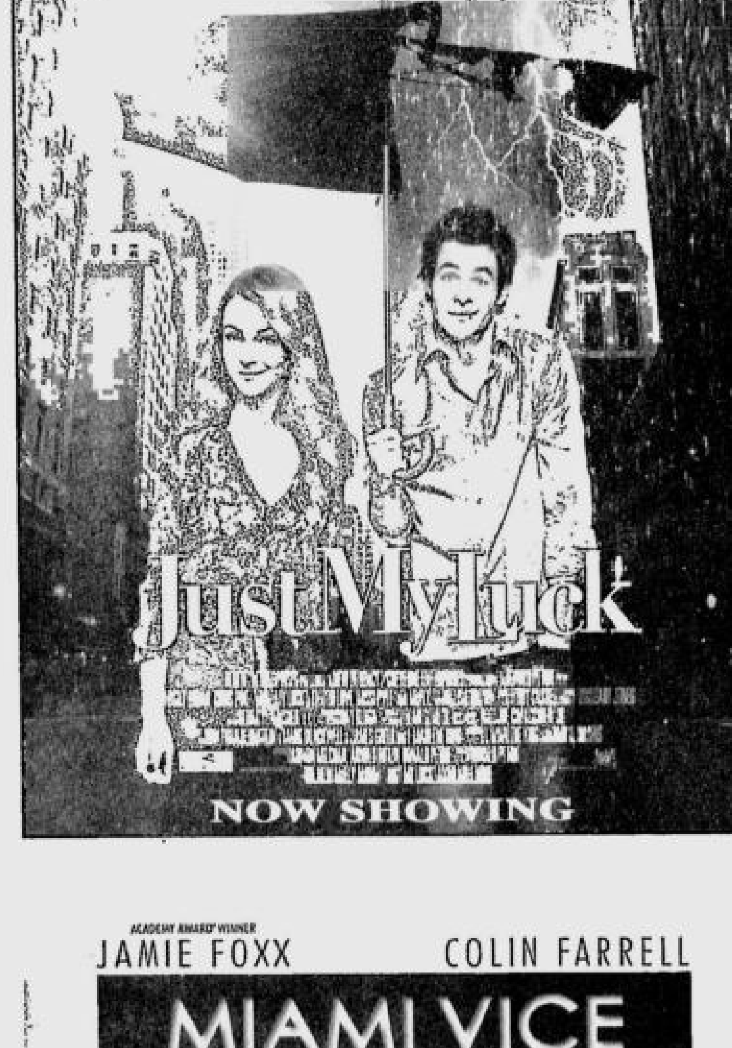

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

Shang Cineplex
6th Floor Shangri-la Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City

1 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
2 (DOLBY) ANT BULLY
3 (DOLBY) SUKOB
4 (DOLBY) WOLF CREEK

PREMIERE
(DOLBY) THE BREAK- UP

Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216

1 ANT BULLY
2 THE BREAK UP
3 SUKOB
4 MIAMI VICE

Starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150

3 MIAMI VICE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) SUKOB
5 WOLF CREEK

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504265, 8433994

1 WOLF CREEK
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 ANT BULLY

THEATRES

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUKOB

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271

1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest Festival Cinema
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72

1 SUKOB
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 ANT BULLY
5 THE BREAK UP
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 SUKOB
8 LADY IN THE WATER
9 JUST MY LUCK
10 WOLF CREEK

Blue Wave Marikina
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927

1 (DOLBY) SUKOB
2 (DOLBY) ANT BULLY
3 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228

1 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
2 WOLF CREEK
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY
5 TAMARA

Marketplace
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

1 SPL
2 SUKOB
3 JUST MY LOCK
4 RESERVED

Masagana Cinema 2000
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274

1 SUKOB
2 WOLF CREEK
3 WILD ORCHID-2

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4443246)

1 CHAOS
2 NACHO LIBRE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 NACHO LIBRE
2 LOVEWRECK
3 ANT BULLY
4 SUKOB

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237 7007

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS

Eastwood Cinemas
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72

1 SUKOB
2 MIAMI VICE
3 ANT BULLY
4 THE BREAK UP

Cinema 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

1 NACHO LIBRE
2 SUKOB
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146

1 NACHO LIBRE
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUKOB
4 WILD ORCHEDS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

1 CHAOS
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 NACHO LIBRE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736

1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4746

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 THE NUN
2 HUBAD NA MULTO
3 BUKID AY BASA
4 I WANNA BE HAPPY

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 SUKOB
2 SAPLOT
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
5 NACHO LIBRE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 NACHO LIBRE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

1 WHITE LADY
2 BUKID AY BASA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 LADY IN THE WATER • THX — 12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40
2 MIAMI VICE — 10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
3 JUST MY LUCK — 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
4 WOLF CREEK — 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10.00
5 THE ANT BULLY — 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
6 SUKOB — 12:30 2.50 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 — 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
8 THE BREAK-UP — 12.20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
9 TAMARA — 1:25 3:35 5:45 7:55 10:00
10 SUPERMAN RETURNS — 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 SUKOB — 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 WOLF CREEK — 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
3 THE ANT BULLY — 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
4 TAMARA — 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:05
5 MIAMI VICE — 10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
6 JUST MY LUCK — 12:30 2:50
THE BREAK-UP — 5:10 7:30 9:50
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 — 12:00 3:10 6:20 9:30

METRO EAST 682-8193 / 682-8199

1 LADY IN THE WATER — 12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9.00
2 SUKOB — 11:40 2.00 4:20 6:40 9:00
3 THE ANT BULLY — 12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
4 JUST MY LUCK — 1 00 3:00 5:00 7 00 9:00
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 — 12:00 3 00 6 00 9:00
6 THE BREAK-UP — 1:00 3 00 5:00 7:00 9:00
7 MIAMI VICE — 12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00
8 WOLF CREEK — 12 50 2:50 4.50 6.50 9:00

NOVALICHES 935-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MIAMI VICE
2 THE ANT BULLY
3 WOLF CREEK
4 SUKOB

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2578

1 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 SUKOB
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE ANT BULLY
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 WOLF CREEK

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Kindly answer all questions completely.
Fill in the missing letters to complete the right answer

1 The creator of the Miami Vice TV Series
M _ CH _ EL M _ NN

2. Plays the role of Sonny Crockett in the Miami Vice movie
_ OL _ N FA _ R _ LL

3. Jamie Foxx plays this character in the movie.
R _ CA _ D _ T _ _ BS

4. In the TV Series, who played the part of Caitlin, the woman Sonny Crockett marries?
SH _ EN _ E _ STO _

5. Miami is in what US State?
FL _ R _ DA

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1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 WILD ORCHID 2
4 SUKOB

LIPA (043) 312-5870

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 THE NUN

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 LOVEWRECKED
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 SUKOB

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 THE ANT BULLY
2 NACHO LIBRE
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 SUKOB

IMUS (046) 875-3838 (046) 471-6188

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 LOVEWRECKED
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY

STARMILLS (045) 875-1921 (045) 961-6270

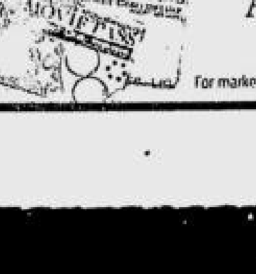
1 THE ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 KISS KISS BANG BANG
4 THE COOLER
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2

BACOLOD (034) 441-0453 (034) 441-0459

1 SUKOB
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
3 UNITED 93
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 AN AMERICAN HAUNTING
6 SPL

ILOILO (033) 336-8070

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 WILD ORCHID 2
4 UNITED 93



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Cultural shows at FEU

By Andy Bais

VIOLAN and Laurel (left and center) topbill cast of rousing religious musical, "Mapaghimalang Birhen ng Caysasay."

FAR EASTERN UNIVERSITY'S PRESIdent's Committee on Culture should be complimented for coming up with a full calendar of free cultural shows and artistic events for the education and edification of the university's many students.

Its 2006-2007 season at the university's beautiful vintage art-deco theater began last June 30 with a concert, "For the Love of Music," with the Cultural Planners Association of the Philippines, with George Yang, Jennifer Uy-Wong, Joanna Ong-Go and Jude Areopagita.

Last July 5, Lisa Macuja-Elizalde and Osias Barroso topbilled a lecture-demonstration on ballet, with excerpts from "Don Quixote," "Carmen" and other ballets.

Enthusiastic

And last July 31, Lito Casaje mounted Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream" for the delectation of an enthusiastic student audience.

Coming up in August: On Aug. 8, an invitational cultural show for the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction Delegates.

Aug. 16, 10:45 a.m. and 3:15 p.m. performances of Ryan Cayabyab and Nestor Torre's acclaimed musical, "Mapaghimalang Birhen ng Caysasay," topbilled by Cocoy Laurel, Ivy Violan, Nicole David, Cheloy Dans, Rito Asilo and other musical theater standouts. The rousing and moving religious musical is produced by noted sculptor, Ramon Orlina.

On Sept. 6, the musical revue, "Past Perfect," features compositions by George Gershwin, Cole Porter and Richard Rodgers, presented in coordination with Ms Della Besa.

On Sept. 28, the Barangay Theater Guild presents excerpts from Ladislas Fodor's "The Vigil," directed by National Artist Daisy Avellana, in coordination with the Cultural Planners Association of the Philippines.

November offering: The musical version of "A New Yorker in Tondo," libretto by Winton Ynion, music by Hermie Rivera, direction by Zemaia San Milo, featuring the FEU Theater Guild, Nov. 27.

The 2007 calendar leads off with "Serenade" on Jan. 18, featuring FEU Cultural Groups. Feb. 16 showcases a Student Festival in celebration of National Arts Month. And on Feb. 19, FEU students and faculty members can enjoy the "Steps Ballet Concert," presented in cooperation with Sofia Zobel-Elizalde of Steps Dance Studio.

Vital part

Kudos to the FEU President's Committee on Culture and its executive director, Rustica Carpio, for making arts and culture a vital part of the education of the university's students.

May other schools come up with exciting cultural seasons of their own, for their own students' pleasure and edification.

Visceral thrills in 'Wolf Creek'

By Noelani Torre

THE PLOT OF AUSSIE THRILLER, "Wolf Creek," is simple: Three young backpackers jump into a beat-up car, get stranded, and make the biggest mistake of their lives when they accept help from a stranger.

What you see in the trailer is more or less what you get in the movie, and even if it sounds like the plot of every other teenage horror flick you've ever seen, don't write this particular thriller off.

Its narrative may be unoriginal, but the movie has something going for it that your typical teenage scream movie will never have—visceral, gut-wrenching fear.

"Wolf Creek" hails from the slasher-flick tradition of which 1979's "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" is the most famed example.

Debut

Like the abovementioned movie, this debut from director Greg McLean draws its thrills from our most basic fears—of venturing out into wild, uncivilized country; of strangers; of a madman with a big knife.

Purporting to be "based on true events," the production is actually based on an amalgamation of several cases that occurred in Australia during the '80s and '90s—the "Backpacker Murders" committed by Ivan Milat, and the murders committed by a mechanic, Bradley John Murdoch.

Both men treated murder as though it were a game, and veteran actor, John Jarratt, no doubt

VISCERAL/ E3

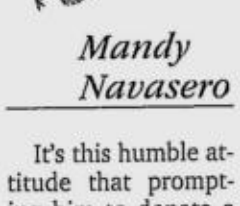
Salsa luminary at Philippine Plaza

TITO NIEVES' SPECIAL CONCERT, "Tito Nieves...Live in Manila" takes place on Aug. 19, 6 p.m. at the Philippine Plaza in Pasay City.

At a tender age, Nieves knew that music was his calling. Now, he is dubbed as "The Great Salsero" and "The Pavarotti of Salsa Music."

Cited by various award-giving bodies for his exemplary albums and performances Tito remains humble. He shares: "Awards are wonderful, but the best recognition an artist can receive is the one given by the public."

STREET SMART



Mandy Navasero

It's this humble attitude that prompting him to donate a portion of his concert's earnings to Filipino street children under the care of Vides Foundation.

Call TicketWorld at 891-9999, Ticketnet at 911-5555, or Northstar Entertainment at 896-9939.

* * *

Congratulations to *Tita* Eggie Apostol, this year's recipient of the Ramon Magsaysay Award for Journalism. The signal honor is well-deserved and long overdue. Apostol is the founder of the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

E-mail mandy-navasero@yahoo.com.ph, or call 8991767.

NIEVES. Benefit show for street children.

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Bullies, real and animated

"THE ANT BULLY." Teaches vital lessons.

By Rito P. Asilo

"The Ant Bully"

D: John A. Davis
S: Voices of Julia Roberts, Nicolas Cage, Meryl Streep and Paul Giamatti

AFTER HAVING BEEN RElentlessly bullied by a bigger kid in his suburban neighborhood, 10-year-old Lucas Nickle (Zach Tyler Eisen) vents his frustrations and anger on the ant hills (and their lilliputian occupants) in his front yard—with a water hose.

When a magic potion is whipped up by the ant colony's vengeful wizard ant, Zoc (Nicolas Cage), Lucas is soon shrunken down to insect size, held captive inside the ants' haven under the care of nurse ant, Hova (Julia Roberts), and is then sentenced by the Ant Queen (Meryl Streep) to live in the colony until he learns to absorb and respect the ways of the ants.

Lucas also has to face Stan Beals (Paul Giamatti), the insect exterminator, whom he hired to vanquish the ant colonies.

With straightforward storytelling, John A. Davis creates a visually delightful and relevant parable about a world ruled more by force and power than by reason and compassion.

The plot's basic conflict and its resulting denouement may seem too simplistic for older viewers, but the film's very simplicity allows the movie to drive its metaphorical slant without ambiguity: "Some people attack without reason—just because they can!"

Other than its inventive, eye-candy cinematic rendering, there's much to like in the vocal performances turned in by its principal voice cast, led by a surprisingly upbeat Cage, the majestic Streep, the appropriately sinister Giamatti, the affable Roberts and the endearing Eisen.

The production may not boast of a brilliant comic's over-the-top antics—like those constantly turned in by Robin Williams and Jim Carrey—but it benefits from its straightforward tale about the eternal fight between good and evil—a vital lesson that needs to be continually told to the young and old alike.

"Cavite"

D: Neill Dela Llana, Ian Gamazon
S: Ian Gamazon

In Neill Dela Llana and Ian Gamazon's searing study of terrorism, political ideology and national identity, Adam (Ian Gamazon), a 32-year-old Fil-Am, returns to his parents' home country, only to be told that his mother and sister have been kidnapped by Islamic extremists.

Adam has to acquiesce to their demands if he wishes to see his loved ones alive. Apparently, the culprits are in no joking mood—as severed anatomical parts of the two women attest. But, when he's asked to do his share of religious and ideological duty, he's suddenly torn between doing what he's ordered to do and what he feels is right.

With a narrative device similar to the Chris Evans starrer "Cellular" and Joel Schumacher's "Phone Booth," Adam pits wits against an unseen but omniscient caller, who orders him around the narrow, poverty-stricken streets of Cavite: To withdraw his murdered father's $75,000 bank deposit, then pick up a bag that contains a bomb that he has to leave inside the busy Quiapo church.

Dela Llana and Gamazon's bold cinematic statement stands as a startling and unsettling commentary about the Philippines' state of socio-political unrest, and how it continues to wreak havoc on the lives of its long-suffering people.

The young filmmakers keep the story simmering before it reaches its affecting but far-from-cathartic conclusion. It mirrors a confoundingly violent world that no man deserves.

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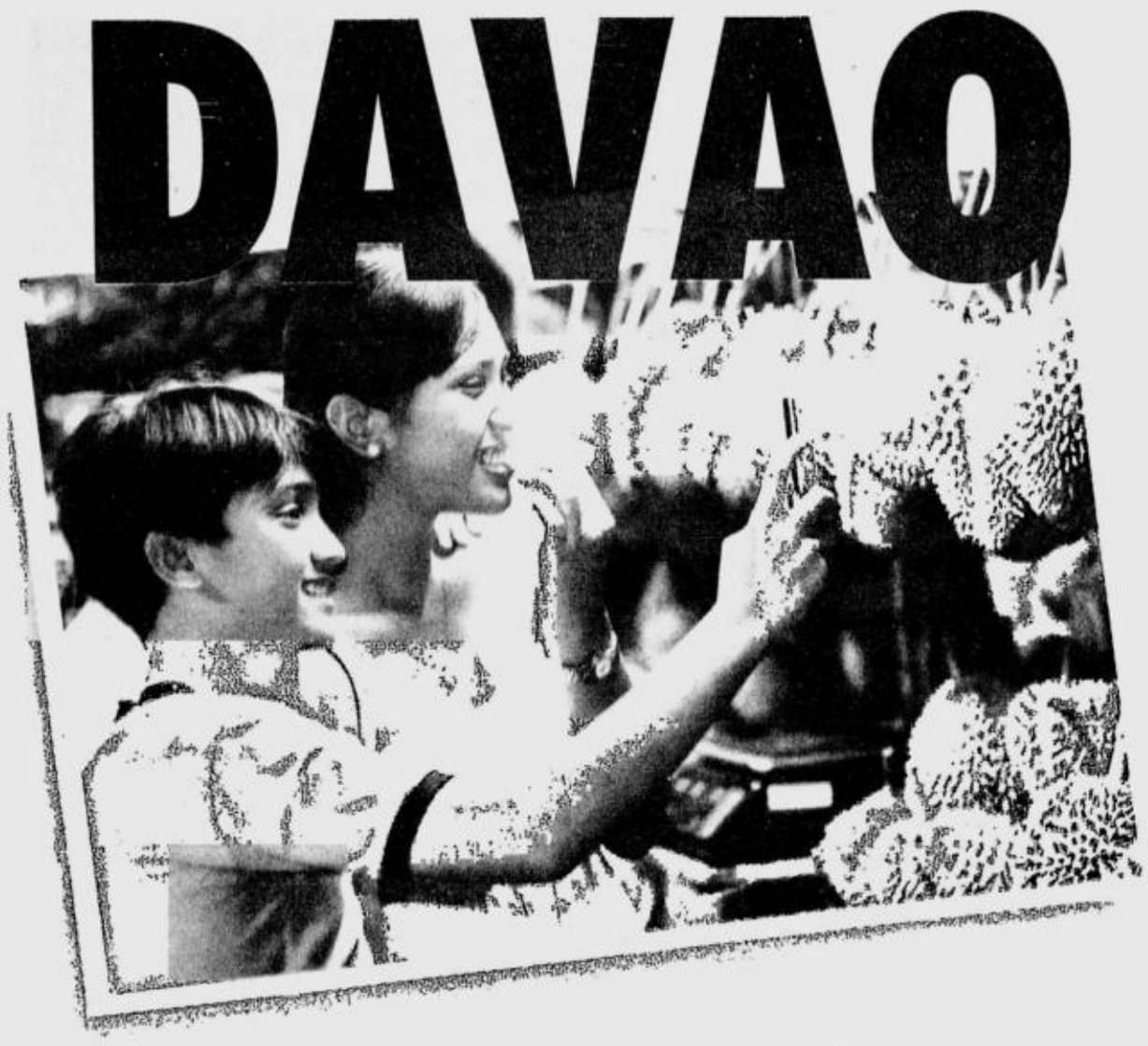
BIGGER IN SUN IN DAVAO



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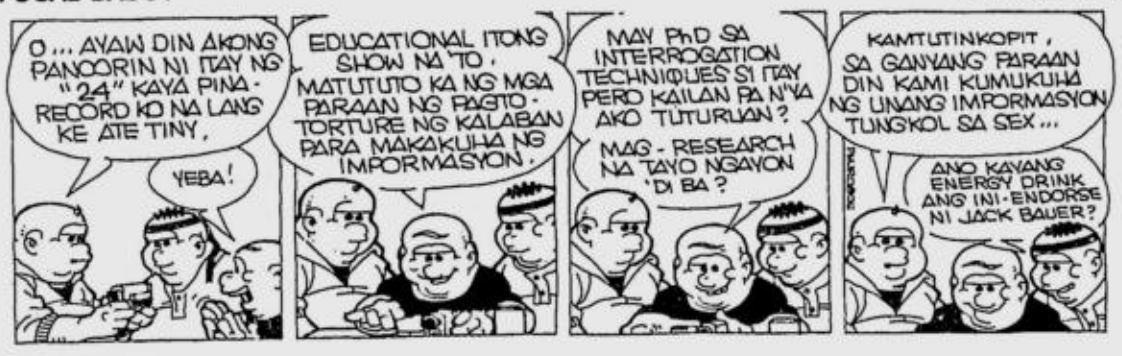


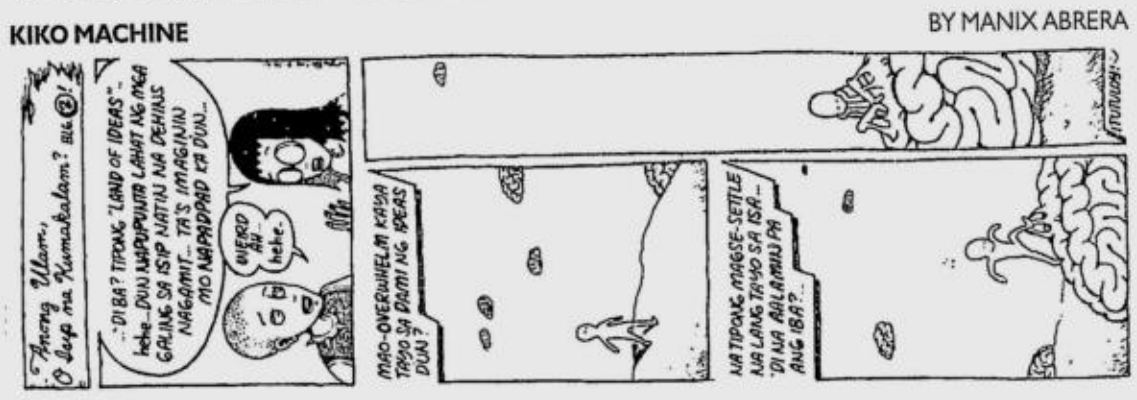
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

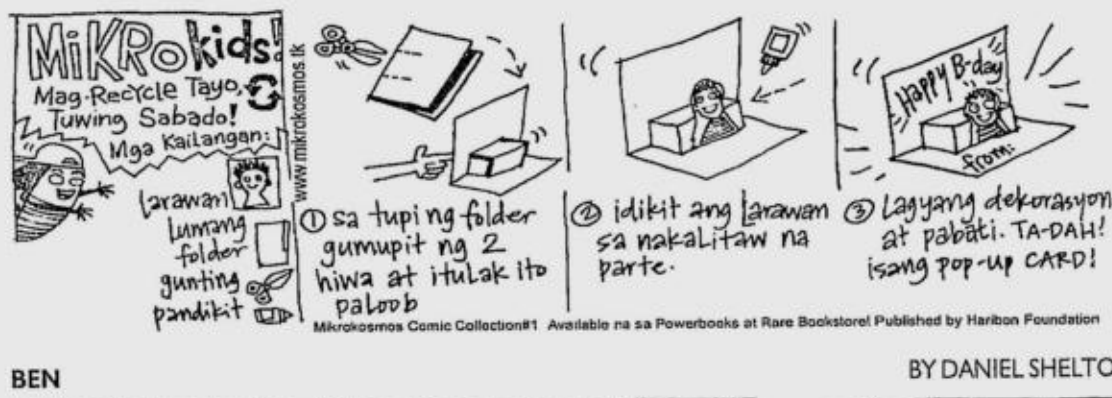
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA



MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Sleight of hand
11 Sacramento's __ Arena
15 Really rile
16 Paraphernalia
17 Gibbons, for example
18 Moroccan region
19 Genetic fingerprints
20 Ballpark figs.
21 Doctor's solution
23 Funny pages pooch
24 Maigret's creator
25 Godzilla rival
28 Greek portico
29 Hobbit ally
30 Ouzo flavoring
31 Get a whiff of
32 AKA's commerce cousin
33 Tourmaline or amethyst
34 Conciliate
36 Granola morsel
37 Hot jewelry?
38 Quaff
39 Helpful
41 Iron Man Ripken
42 Actress Skye
43 Ogre associates
44 Customers
46 Slip-on slipper
47 Tribute
48 Be sulky
49 Common pair?
52 Meyers and Fleischer
53 Bush trip abroad
56 Ceremonial practice
57 Snitch
58 Jumble
59 Alums' connections

DOWN
1 Maintained
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3 Veracruz residence
4 Amer. ship designation
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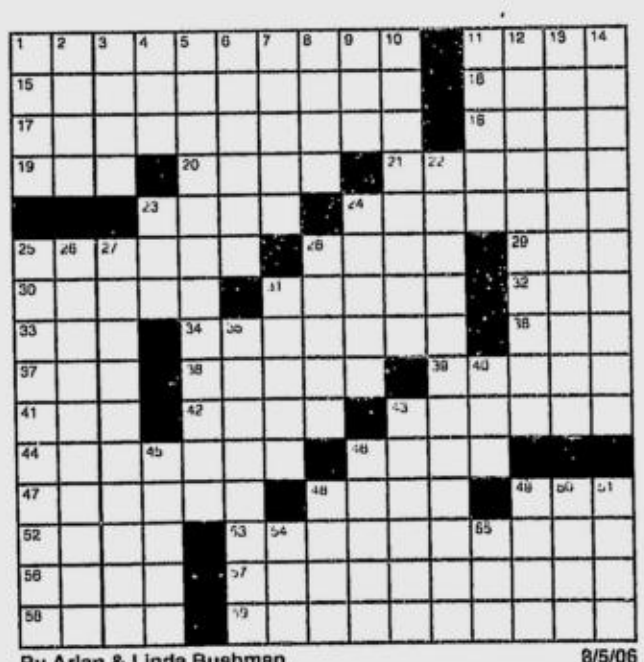
6 Shah's former domain
7 Emulate Cicero
8 Dental additions
9 Shoshone
10 Training periods
11 Dexterous
12 Processed crude
13 Splashy dive
14 Gets the lay of the land
22 College athletics standing
23 Surprised expressions
24 Minute or chuck
25 Amulet
26 Diet pop claim
27 Constraints for exams
28 Act part
31 Plays with a top
35 Squawks
40 Low digit
43 Birthplace of Elvis Presley
45 Palliates
46 Slogan
48 Alg. or trig.
49 Morales of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
50 Unit of distance
51 Fr. holy women
54 Middle of a game?
55 "Addams Family" member



By Arlan & Linda Bushman
Chicago, IL

8/5/06

Friday's Puzzle Solved

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8/5/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong presence. You appear dignified, noble and certainly unflappable. You execute your ideas with determination and resolve. Because of this, others immediately respect you and believe in you. Essentially, you need to be your own boss. (You don't like taking orders.) An interesting choice will present itself to you this year. Choose wisely.
Birthdate of: Adam Yauch, musician; Neil Armstrong, astronaut; Patrick Ewing, basketball player

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): It's important to cultivate gratitude for the goodies that continue to come to you this year. (Because they will.) Inheritances, gifts and favors are waiting for you

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This year, you have the best opportunity you've had in more than a decade to learn more about your closest relationships and partnerships. Keep an open mind. (You must be as good for your partner as he or she is for you.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Your job can improve so much this year. Be on the lookout for ways to make this happen. Be open to new suggestions and changes.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Make plans for a vacation. This is your year to have fun, party and explore your creative potential. Romance and love affairs can be hot and exciting!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your home life is unusually rewarding this year. Many of you are truly enjoying where you live and how you relate to your family.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You have a strong need to communicate to others now. You feel optimistic and enthusiastic about life. This is good. (Everything you do begins with a thought or an intention.)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You can definitely boost your earnings this year. This could entail finding a new job, getting a raise or dreaming up new moneymaking ideas.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Trust in your good fortune. Lucky Jupiter is in your sign this year, where it will stay until November. This happens only once every 12 years. (Count your blessings.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): All your dealings with governments and large institutions can get a favorable boost this year. You can sense that good things are just beyond your grasp now.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Enjoy the increased popularity that comes your way now. Groups, clubs and organizations can benefit you. Don't hesitate to meet people. (Strangers are just friends you haven't met.)

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is your turn to enjoy some kind of public recognition for your efforts either at work or in your group. Others definitely respect what you have achieved.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Many of you are making good headway in areas related to publishing, the media, medicine, the law or higher education. Book whatever travel plans you can this year.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

			7		4		5	
1		7						
8			9				4	
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	5						3	
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	2		3		9			

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Difficulty Level ★★★★ 8/05

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

4	8	2	9	1	3	6	5	7
7	1	5	4	8	6	3	9	2
3	9	6	5	2	7	4	1	8
9	2	3	1	5	4	8	7	6
8	6	1	7	9	2	5	3	4
5	4	7	3	6	8	9	2	1
1	7	4	8	3	5	2	6	9
6	5	9	2	4	1	7	8	3
2	3	8	6	7	9	1	4	5

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Difficulty Level ★★★★

UP screenings for Cinemalaya films

FROM AUG. 7 TO 10, THE 2006 Cinemalaya films will be screened at UP Diliman. Schedule: Aug. 7 at 2 p.m., Winning short films: "Orasyon," "Kwarto," "Parang Pelikula," "Putot"; 5 p.m., "Rotonda"; 7 p.m., "Mudraks"; 9 p.m., Short films: "Orasyon," "Parang Pelikula," "Putot," "Puwang," "Sa Silaw."

Aug. 8 at 2 p.m., "Batad"; 5 p.m., Best Picture winner, "Tulad ng Dati"; 7 p.m., "In Da Red Korner"; 9 p.m., "Donsol."

Aug. 9 at 2 p.m., short films—"10:25 ng Gabi," "Gee-Gee at Waterina," "Kwarto," "Labada," "No Passport Needed"; 5 p.m., Winning short films: "Orasyon," "Kwarto," "Parang Pelikula," "Putot"; 7 p.m., "Donsol"; 9 p.m., "Rotonda."

Aug. 10 at 2 p.m., "Saan Nagtatago si Happiness?"; 5 p.m., "Ang Huling Araw ng Linggo"; 7 p.m., "Batad"; 9 p.m., "Tulad ng Dati."

'Nasaan si Hesus?'

Bing Pimentel's acclaimed religious musical, "Nasaan si Hesus?," which has been performed more than 60 times all over the country, will have five repeat performances this month: On Aug. 5, it will be staged at the Our Lady of Fatima church in Bacood, Manila. For tickets, call Andy at 780-9210.

On Aug. 11 and 12, "Nasaan si Hesus?" will be performed for the Diocese of Kaloocan, in cooperation with the Kaloocan Diocese Schools Association at the Mother Francisca Auditorium, St. James Academy, Malabon City. Performances are at 3 and 7 p.m. Call 287-4028 or 0916-7052625.

On Yes FM 101.1

On Yes FM 101.1, wake up to the perky "Yes, Gising Na!" weekday show 4 to 6 a.m. hosted by Kevin Bacon.

From 6 to 9 a.m., Idol-T Browne or Bryan Quitoriano hosts "Primetime Yes." At 9 a.m., Bruce Dillis (Prince Valiant Tanglao) takes over, followed by

Tito Potato (Peter Paul Sales) at 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

So, for happy, wacky mornings and listerner-friendly program hosts, tune in to Yes FM 101.1.

'Available Light'

On view until Aug. 17 at Galerie Astra (tel. 890-3988) is "Available Light," an exhibit of photographs by Ivi Avellano-Cosio. The gallery is at the LRI Business Plaza, 210 Nicanor Garcia st. (Reposo), Makati. The exhibit is curated by Albert Avellana.

On Star World

At 9 p.m. on Aug. 6, "For the Record" presents "Take That." The documentary surveys the popular group's spectacular musical career, from gigging in Manchester clubs and performing on sell-out stadium tours to the split triggered by the acrimonious departure of the band's bad boy, Robbie Williams.

Animated Superman series

Warner Home Video has compiled "The Adventure of Superman" in an animated series, now available in a Super Bundle Pack on VCD. Pack One features three episodes—"Cold Vengeance," "Luthor's Quest" and "Programmed for Destruction," while Pack Two has "Last of Krypton,"

MONTAGE

"the Mainman" and "transfer of Power."

Moonrise Film Festival

The second Moonrise Film Festival will be held at the Gateway Cineplex in Cubao on

UP/F5

PUBLIC SERVICE

Sara Lee made our dreams come true!

Lolita Lagdan and Jeanne delos Santos both had heartfelt dreams. During those years when her husband was working in Saudi Arabia, Lolita, a medical technologist, yearned for the time when he wouldn't have to go abroad to earn a decent living. On the other hand, Jeanne, then a typical working girl, longed for a more financially rewarding career.

Then both ladies discovered Sara Lee Direct Selling. Realizing that the company distributes some of the world's most recognized brands such as Hanes, Playtex and Colour Collection, Lolita decided to become a Sara Lee dealer. Likewise, Jeanne saw the promise of a lucrative business since Sara Lee products are consumables, offering a highly attractive income opportunity.

Their dreams have come true: Lolita Lagdan (topmost) and Jeanne delos Santos, two of Sara Lee Direct Selling's top IBMs for 2006.

Since she joined Sara Lee, Lolita's husband never had to return to Saudi Arabia. Today, the Lagdans are active partners in a thriving direct selling business, with Lolita heading up Sara Lee's Shaw Blvd. Branch.

There was no turning back for Jeanne either. With her never-say-die attitude in facing the challenges of a direct selling career, she gradually climbed the ladder of success as Sara Lee - Edsa's top producer.

This year, both ladies emerged as two of the company's top performing independent business managers (IBMs) -- an achievement that has provided them with so many perks, including free travel opportunities. "We've frolicked in the most charming beaches and toured the most scenic regions!" both women enthuse. From their earnings, they have likewise bought brand-new cars and sent their kids to excellent schools.

"My dream of seeing my family together, permanently has come true!" exclaims Lolita. "I've always believed determination would get me somewhere," adds Jeanne. "But I never realized it would make me go places -- literally!"

Indeed, Lolita and Jeanne's most fervent wishes have come true. Thanks to Sara Lee, these hardworking ladies are now living out their dreams of happier, fuller lives for their family.

Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines, Inc. is the authorized distributor of prestigious brands that include Playtex, Hanes, Champion, Wonderbra, Just My Size, Girls' Attitudes, Colour Collection, Beauty Touch, Ivana, Georgie On Ice, VS. Versus, Nutrimetics and Zwitsal. Sara Lee Direct Selling Philippines, Inc. is also known as Fuller Cosmetics in Latin America and Nutrimetics in many parts of the world. If you have questions, need additional information or wish to become a dealer, call 859-3000, or send an email to customer_relation@saraleedirectselling.ph. You can also send inquiries through fax number 867-2279. You may also get in touch through text at 0921-9643367 or 0915-9823471

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SUKOB PG 1:15,3:25,5:35,7:45,10:00	MIAMI VICE R13 1:50,4:40,7:30,10:20	ANT BULLY G 11:30,1:40,3:50, 6:00,8:10,10:10
ANT BULLY G 1:10,3:20,5:30 BREAK-UP R13 7:50,10:10	WOLFCREEK R18 12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	MIAMI VICE R13 11:30,2:20,5:10,8:00

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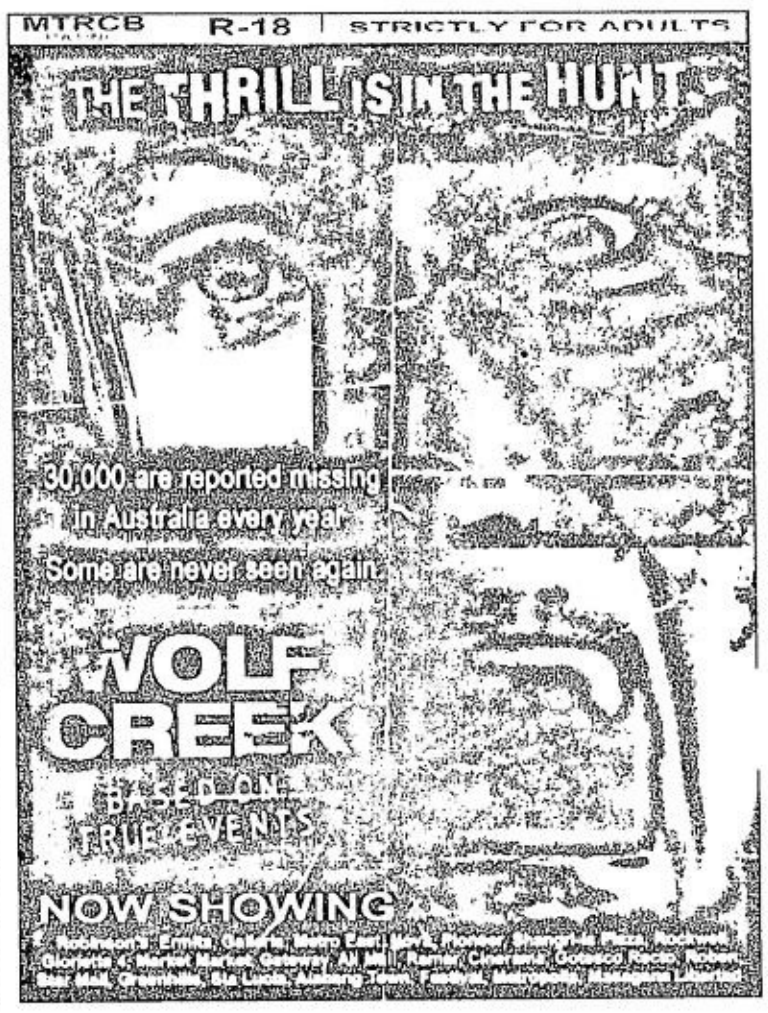
MATINEE PHP 111.00 - SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM - MONDAY-FRIDAY



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AT THE CINEMAS
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB1 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE ANT BULLY	2 MIAMI VICE	3 TAMARA	4 SUKOB
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE ANT BULLY	2 JUST MY LUCK	3 THX MIAMI VICE 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 / THE PRODUCERS	5 WOLF CREEK	6 SUKOB	7 THE BREAK-UP
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SUKOB		2 MIAMI VICE	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE ANT BULLY 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX MIAMI VICE 12:40, 3:20, 6:00, 8:40, 11:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 JUST MY LUCK 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE BREAK-UP 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SUKOB 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MIAMI VICE		2 SUKOB	
	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 WOLF CREEK	5 THE BREAK-UP	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SUKOB	2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 LOVEWRECKED
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 SUKOB		2 WOLF CREEK	
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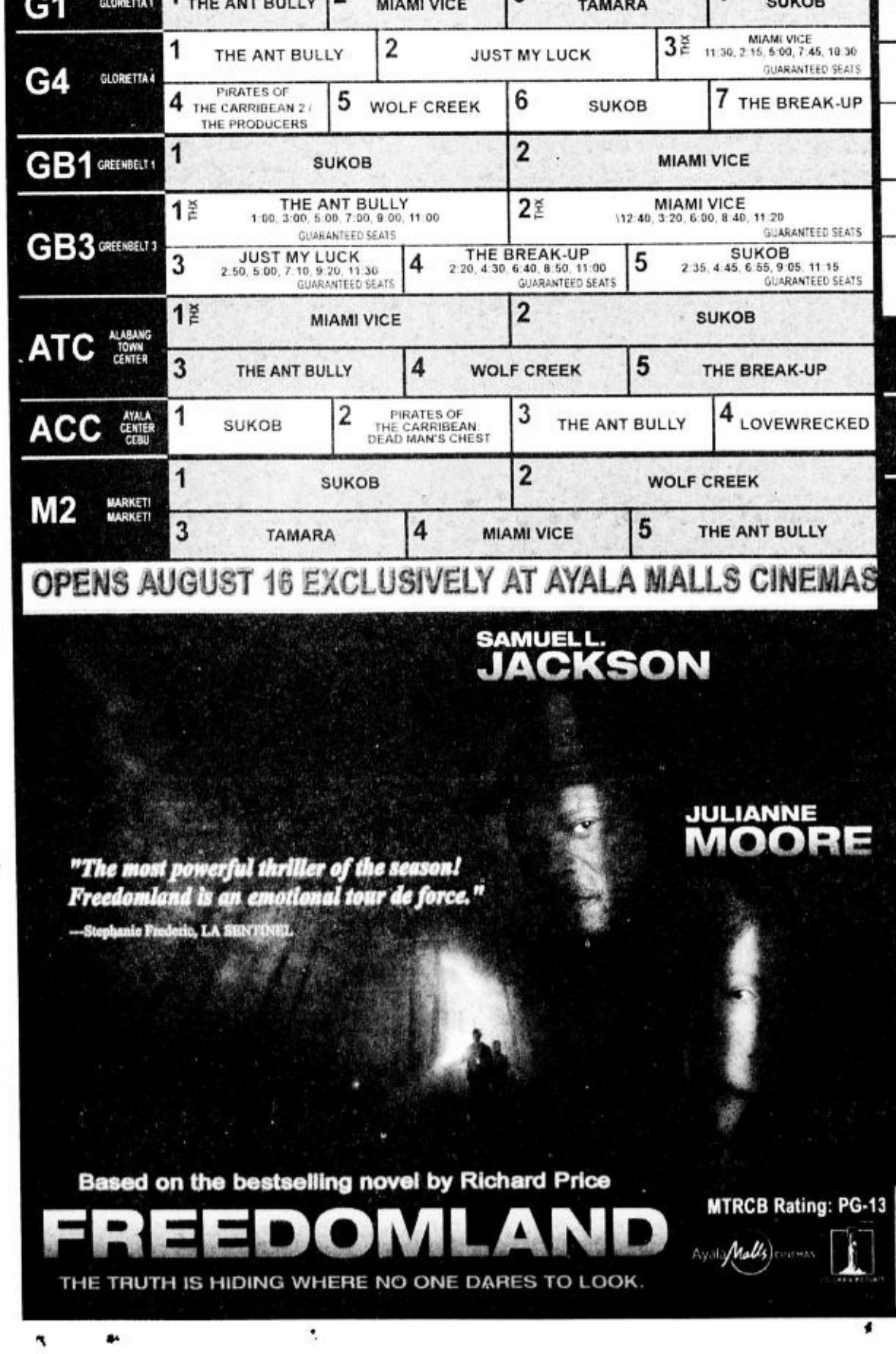

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Marilou Diaz-Abaya boosts new filmmakers

By Nestor U. Torre

SOME MAINSTREAM FILM PEOple are snittily critical of Cinemalaya's digital features, dismissing them as amateurish, overly experimental and downright incoherent. Happily, other veteran filmmakers are far more supportive, taking new directors' limitations in stride, exulting in the festival movies' freshness and daring, and regarding Cinemalaya as an exciting work in progress.

Observations

One Cinemalaya booster is acclaimed filmmaker and educator, Marilou Diaz-Abaya, who enthusiastically patronized the recently concluded second Cinemalaya film fest at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. She presented her observations during the Independent Films Congress that was a side feature of the festival.

DIAZ-ABAYA. The language of motion pictures evolves with time and with every generation that uses it.

CARICATURE BY LA MISTADES

She shared: "How wonderful that the new filmmakers showed passion in telling stories about the human condition! Most of their entries were character- rather than plot- or special effects-driven.

"The range of human struggles narrated in many, various styles is proof that, with the advancements in—and easy access to—digital technology, more people can now make 'indie' films for all kinds of special audiences.

"In addition to content, another production value was the participation of very good actors, both new and seasoned. Prevailing over technical deficiencies in most of the indie films, the actors evoked a wide spectrum of human experiences, touching the audience in ways which even the best technical equipment could never duplicate.

Inappropriate mix

"Some tips, though, for the new indie filmamkers' next movies: First, exert more effort in mastering the principle of the Line of Vision, and spend more time studying the impact of different editing techniques. An inappropriate mix in establishing space and time disorients the audience.

"Imagine writing or reading a novel filled with typographical errors—annoying, *di ba*? Same thing when the Line of Vision is crossed, or when matching shots are edited successively, or when a hand-held camera starts behaving like a trespasser or voyeur.

"Second, study the properties of sound, and practice recording it for the big screen. Orchestrating multi-sound tracks takes more than just mixing dialogue, music and effects.

"Sound can be used to enrich or counterpoint the visual narrative. Bad sound recording disrupts viewers' attention. Worse, it ruins their suspension of disbelief even in good stories.

"The language of motion pictures, like any living language, evolves with time and with every generation that uses it. For many young filmmakers today, it is their mother tongue.

Medium

"Nevertheless, there is much more to be learned about the motion picture alphabet, grammar, line of vision, punctuation marks and syntax before a serious filmmaker can truly master the medium.

"'Grammatical' errors compromise the visual narrative of even the best-written screenplay. *Sayang yung* effort of writing very good material if it would only be diminished by directors' lapses in composition, grammar and syntax.

"Precisely because indies are made on very low budgets, not enough time and never-adequate technical equipment, indie filmmakers must all the more rely on the most basic rudiments of the language of motion

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OPENS AUG. 9

Insider's view of 'Philippine Idol' semi-finals at CCP

By Nestor U. Torre

LAST TUESDAY MORNING, WE were fortunate to attend the second round of the "Philippine Idol" auditions at the Main Theater of the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

When we got to the theater lobby, it was full of excited "survivors" of the tilt's first round, all 163 of them from different parts of the country.

Inside the Main Theater itself, however, calm reigned as a few ABC-5 production people prepped the stage for the day's taping. The iconic "Philippine Idol" sign hung prominently over the otherwise bare stage, directly in front of the jurors' huge desk, which was perched on a large, round pedestal, veritably a mini-stage of its own.

Taping

After what seemed to be hours of fixing this and adjusting that, the set was deemed ready for taping, so the judges—Ryan Cayabyab, Pilita Corrales and Francis M—were brought in, and the second round of auditions began.

Auditionees were separated in groups of 15 each. Our notes on the first group show that we thought five of the 15 deserved to move on to the third level. Detailed notes indicate plus or minus points, which may be of help to talents who may think of joining other singing tilts in the future:

Clichés

"Too much *birit*" . . . "Doesn't know how to work with a mike, 'pops' into it" . . . "Started out nervous, but got better—still, performance is full of clichés, imitating other name singers". . . "Strong voice, but rough and awkward phrasing and interpretation". . . "Cool voice, dark, good looks". . . "Nasal delivery". . . "Big voice, but performance too jazzed-up for effect". . . "OK, but too many vocal 'curlicues'". . . "Full, expressive voice."

Sartorial note: All of the guys and gals in the first group wore jeans or pants.

Exception

Seven singers in the second group got our nod. For the first time, we saw female contestants wearing skirts and dresses. But, the first batch's effort to look casual was generally sustained in the second group's outfits, with the exception of some auditionees in "costumes."

Our notes were pretty much the same, with these additional variations: "Ok voice, but little personality". . . "*ma-drama* song choice, varied vocal dynamics". . . "Focused too much on technicalities, not interpretation."

As for the third and final group we listened to, six auditionees got good marks in our book. Additional notes: "Good voice, but studied". . . "Petite singer with full voice—but, *birit* styling is a turn-off."

Happily, however, there were some auditionees who resisted the temptation to impress the judges by going in for the *birit* singing style that's so popular in these parts. We hoped that they got extra plus points from the jurors for their self-control and good musical judgment.

At about this point, we got a clearer understanding of the tough task that faced the "Philippine Idol" judges. Aside from good singing voices, which many of the second-round auditionees possessed, we found ourselves focusing more on the "idol" part of the TV talent search's title: What was there about this particular contestant that was of "star quality," that not only singing experts, but the general public would delight in?

WITH a song and hope in their hearts, young Filipino singers are doing their utmost to achieve their dreams of entertainment stardom *via* ABC-5's newest and biggest talent tilt.

Risks

Generally, the auditionees who came through best of all possessed good or "interesting" looks, had a relatively original singing style, shared their feelings while performing, were confident enough to take vocal risks *but* were also aware of their limits, and knew when enough was enough.

That final asset was in short supply during the auditions, so a number of the contestants had to be requested to stop singing when they took up too much time performing "to death."

On the other hand, there were a few singers who performed for only around 30 seconds, believing in the dictum, "less is more."

Good for them, and the jurors must have appreciated their judiciousness—after all, they had 163 singers to listen to!

Third round

We were told that, at the end of the day, 60 "survivors" would be picked for the third round, which would consist of "trio" performances.

And so, to keep on hoping—and praying (some auditionees made the sign of the cross onstage before their turn them).

Well, help from *all* sources is welcome in our finest young singers' determined bid to be named the first Philippine Idol!

Different sound for Freestyle

By Remy Umerez

FREESTYLE IS BACK WITH NEW members, a different sound and a new album, "Freestyle, Live @ 19 East." This is the band's first recording with new members, Joshua Desiderio and Mike Luis as vocalists. Rommel de la Cruz (formerly of Barbie's Cradle) replaced bassist Carlo Tapia after the latter decided to migrate to Australia last year.

The remaining original members of the band are Tat Suzara, Nikki Cabardo, Gerard Banzon and female vocalist, Jinky Vidal.

FREESTYLE. First recording with new members.

Recent gig

The tracks in Freestyle's new album were performed and recorded live during a recent gig. "Freestyle, Live @ 19 East" made it to Tower Records' Top 10 chart. It's also in leading FM stations' shortlist of favorite albums in Metro Manila.

Among the 14 cuts in the album's lineup, "Half Crazy," performed by Joshua, was chosen as its carrier single. The tune introduces the band's new sound.

Vidal shares: "We have a fuller sound now. And we feel capable of doing a lot more, musically."

The album was originally intended for a Feb. 14 release—in time for Valentine's Day, which explains the love song-heavy lineup.

14 songs

More than 20 songs were recorded, but only 14 made it to the final list—among them "I Just Can't Stop Loving You," "Changes in My Life," "Ordinary People," "One Hello," "Cherish," "I Don't Want to Lose You" and "Ebony."

After this album, the band will resume singing original materials—something they've always been identified with. With its new members and a scorching, new sound, Freestyle is raring to make its presence felt once more!

Quark Henares directs new Cueshé MTV

By Rica Arevalo

THE CARRIER SINGLE IN Cueshé's upcoming second album, "Back to Me," shows how the boys from Cebu, composed of Jay Justiniani, Ruben Caballero, Jovan Mabini, Jhunjie Dosdos, Fritz Labrado and Mike Manaloto, demonstrate their maturity through subdued music.

Lyrics

The video, directed by Quark Henares, has a fresh find in Johanna Villeta. She lights up the TV screen even if she's all by her lonesome as she tries to represent the angst-laden lyrics, "Can you feel me? See me falling away. Did you hear me? I'm calling out your name 'cause I'm barely hanging on." Believe it or not, she is the only living human being existing in the metropolis . . .

Visually, the video looks sumptuous due to its numerous locations. It's good to watch a video where the colors and design are delightful to the eyes.

The song cries out, "When will you be coming home back to me?" But, what we see in the video is not the band members acting out their pains, but a single, desperate woman epitomizing their anxiety. Well, that's fresh.

Popular song

On the other hand, when one repackages a popular song into a club mix, will the new music video be better? Not quite. "The Day (Leon Chaplain Massive Room Mix)" appears to be a recycled clip of Hale's popular second single, "The Day You Said Goodnight."

The sepia-toned look uses distracting effects. Why put images when there is no meaning in them? The lyrics lose their meaning and impact when we see out-of-focus shots, bad framing of the microphone, and a lead vocalist (Champ Lui Pio) singing with his clones.

Even if the new version was made for clubbing or dancing, the video shouldn't be done in such a hasty, unimaginative way.

CUESHÉ. Demonstrate their maturity through subdued music.

Lackluster examination of love on the rocks

By Noelani Torre

THE VINCE VAUGHN AND JENnifer Aniston-starrer "The Break-up" veers away from the usual boy-meets-girl-and-they-overcome-all-obstacles-and-live-happily-ever-after route taken by most romantic comedies.

As its title suggests, this movie isn't about the coming together of two people, but about their falling apart. And, if you don't think the story of a couple splitting up can be funny, well, the *raison d'être* of "The Break-up" is to convince you otherwise.

VAUGHN AND ANISTON. Compelling turns.

Reality

"I wondered, how about a movie that's not really a traditional romantic-comedy?" explains actor/writer/producer Vaughn. "I thought it would be interesting to see two people go through the pains of a break-up while living under the same roof. Comedy's always an over-commitment to the absurd. But, I always like things based on reality."

Indeed, you get to see people falling out of love more often in real life—but you certainly don't laugh at them. In the Peyton Reed-helmed "The Break-up," the filmmakers want the viewer to make friends with Vaughn and Aniston's characters, to find them sympathetic. Unfortunately, watching them interact with each other gets to be a drag.

It wouldn't be so if the filmmakers hadn't thrown the comedy outside the window along with the romance. The latter you can live without, considering the movie's anti-romance stance, but the former is absolutely essential.

It's true that "The Break-up" isn't your traditional romantic-comedy. In point of fact, it's neither a romance nor a comedy—and certainly *not* a mixture of both.

What it is, is a movie about the breakdown of a relationship, with a few laughs struggling to make themselves heard over the protagonists' seemingly incessant bickering.

In other words, it's not a fun watch. Unless, of course, your idea of fun is watching (and hearing!) two people fight for one hour and 45 minutes straight.

Funny lines

To be sure, sometimes, they do get to deliver funny lines, but these are somewhat artificially injected into scenes positively steaming with rancor. The juxtaposition is awkward, because it isn't the dark humor you'd expect in a scenario like this.

Instances when the comedy works are few and far apart. Notably, the funniest scene involves the couple's realtor (Jason Bateman of "Arrested Development") attempting to settle property issues between the estranged couple.

Supporting characters

Ironically, the supporting characters get more laughs than the leads. Vincent D'Onofrio as Vaughn's overly fussy older brother, and Judy Davis as Aniston's barracuda-with-a-heart-of-gold boss give pitch-perfect comic performances. This isn't to say, however, that the two leads slept their way through the movie.

Vaughn is compelling—but then, he usually is—and Aniston tries hard to match his performance. It's just that, their characters don't really redeem themselves.

You wonder why they even got together in the first place—and this is "The Break-up's" biggest fault. Before you show us how something gets broken, we should first see what it looks like whole.

UP screenings for Cinemalaya films

From page F4

Aug. 19 and 20. The documentary festival features 16 films on Philippine environment and culture, highlighting topics related to biodiversity, local arts and culture, indigenous peoples, mining and forests. Call the festival organizer, the Center for Environmental Awareness and Education, at 721-7360 or visit www.moonrise-filmfest.com.

On Aug. 7 at the '70s Bistro bar, Anonas, QC, the festival's Awards Night will highlight the films that bagged awards and citations, as judged by leading environmental and film advocates

Dario Fo play

Don't fail to watch Missy Maramara as she turns in a riveting, out-of-the-box performance in Tanghalang Ateneo's Filipino adaptation of Dario Fo's Nobel Prize-winning piece, "The Accidental Death of an Anarchist," under Ricky Abad's direction, at 2 and 7 p.m. today at the Ateneo de Manila's Rizal Mini Theater. The play also features Ronan Capinding, Joseph dela Cruz and Richard de Guzman.

Marilou Diaz-Abaya . . .

From page F4

pictures in order to tell their stories with heartfelt expression.

"Finally, after the selection of scripts, perhaps the winning filmmakers could undergo a 'boot camp' for drills in the motion picture language, as well as in proper protocol and standard procedures in production.

"Lack of funds should not inhibit professional ethics, nor the interdisciplinary skill of unifying the science, art and business of filmmaking. This way, new filmmakers would be able to correct the very handicaps for which they often criticize the 'old mainstream filmmakers.'

Lifelong students

"Our National Artists for Film spent years in diligent study and tireless apprenticeship before commencing their film careers. They were lifelong students of film, and many of them—Ishmael Bernal, in particular—were dedicated teachers, as well. I think they would also be so pleased to have their legacy honored in these new times.

Old masters

"But, the best thing that I always tell my students about the old masters is that they were truly gifted and selfless artists. For them, it was never so much about technical virtuosity or professional competition, but rather about being in genuine solidarity with their coworkers and audiences—and through their films, in being of service to the public. *Mabuhay ang pelikulang* Pilipino!"

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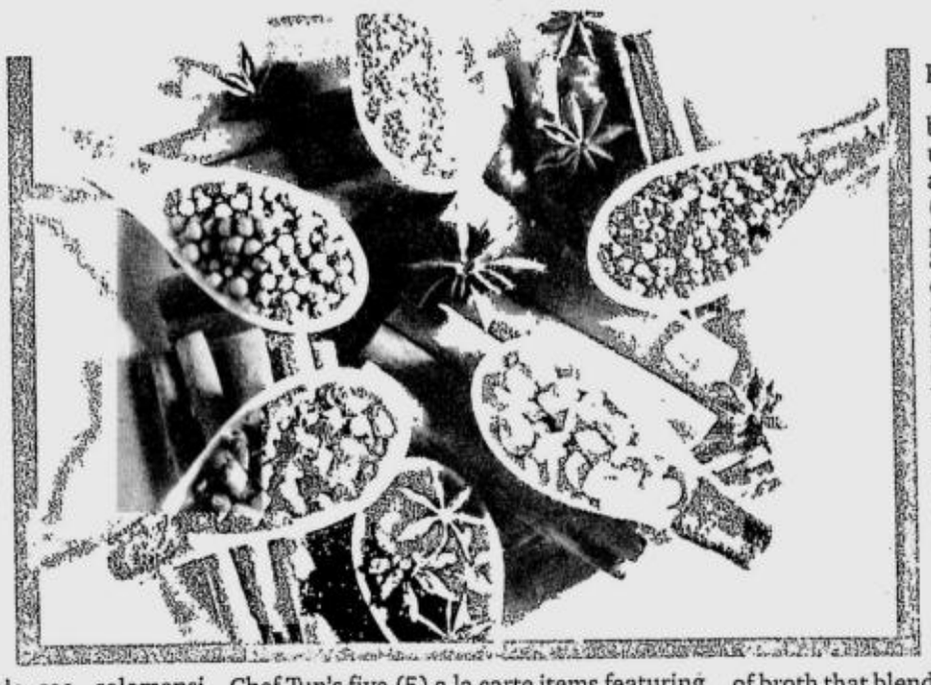
www.waterfronthotels.net

The art of life and food at Dusit



DUSIT HOTEL NIKKO can be considered as a melting pot of cultures as reflected in its collection of Asian specialty restaurants that showcase the best of what Japan, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines has to offer. Which gives you more reason to include us in your itinerary this month of August.

Discover the many facets of the Orient and take pleasure in its allure as we unveil its mysteries through a taste of its hypnotic cuisine.

The month of August calls for a smooth drink of 'Mist' - a refreshing concoction of guyabano juice, orange juice, triple sec, calamansi juice, lychee and a hint of vodka. Relax for a minute and feel the soothing blend of 'Mist'. Priced at P200++ only. Available in all outlets.

Have a generous binge of the 'Hazelnut Croquant Chocolate Torte." - The featured cake this August. The cake is a stylish interplay of amaretto liquor, cream cheese, soft caramel, chocolate ganache and hazelnut and is priced at only P820 nett for a whole cake and P95 nett for a slice. Available at the Deli Shop.

From Aug. 11 to 20, discover the many therapeutic properties of Thai cuisine with Chef Tun's five (5) a la carte items featuring authentic Thai noodle creations at Benjarong Royal Thai restaurant.

Chef Tun's noodle creations like the Kleuy Tiew Tom Yam Seafood Mordin (Thai style hot soup noodle with seafood in hot pot) or the Mee Song Si (stir-fried glass noodle with prawn, chicken and egg) will give you a vivid appreciation of Thai cuisine and of the flavors that makes it distinct.

This August, chef Tomiyama of Benkay Japanese restaurant is proud to offer his very own set menu creation featuring mouth-watering appetizers, assorted sashimi, cooked items and more. Priced at only P1,500++ per person.

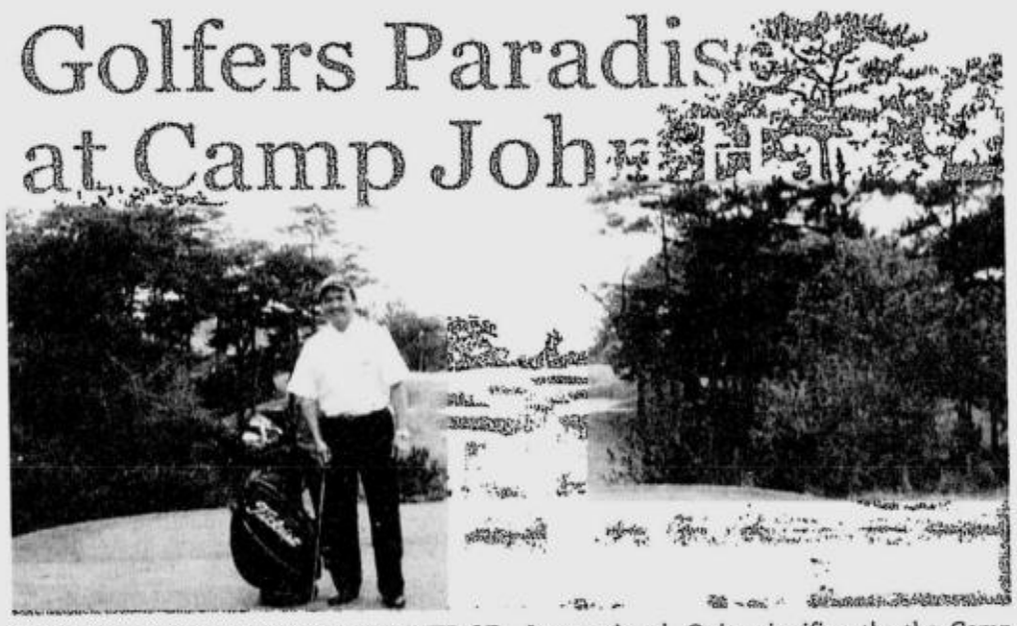
Thien Duong brings back chef Nguyen's Executive Set Menu creations and recommends two (2) set menus for a complete Vietnamese feast. Set Menu A is a six (6) course menu and is priced at P800++ per person while Set Menu B consists of a seven (7) savory dishes and is priced at P850++.

Fiesta San Miguel brings back its popular 'Pinoy Hot Pot.' The 'Pinoy Hot Pot' is good for a family of 3 to 4 persons which complements the Filipino tradition of a hefty family dining experience. It offers 2 kinds of broth that blends well with a variety of ingredients consisting of vegetables and choice of meat or seafood. The 'Seafood Hot Pot' is priced at P750++ per order while the 'Meat Hot Pot' is priced at P650++ per order.

Chocolate reigns supreme this August at the Lobby Lounge with 'Choco-Bicho.' The perfect complement for a mid-day break amidst the chilly months of July and August is a fresh mug of satisfying hot chocolate served with "bicho-bicho" bread on the side. Priced at only P220++ per person.

For more inquiries and reservations, please call up Dusit Hotel Nikko at 867-3333.

Golfers Paradise at Camp John



SINCE ITS RE-OPENING IN THE SUMMER OF 1999, the Camp John Hay Golf Course has continuously received plaudits from avid local and international golfers that have played on this Jack Nicklaus designed, 18-hole world-class championship golf course. It features Tifton 419 fairways and sleek, undulating Bent grass greens, challenging par 69 at 5001 yards from the tips, a full golf cart path, professional caddies, golf cart rentals, and golf set and shoes rentals.

After a refreshing round of golf, golfers can relax at the Clubhouse, an impressive structure with elegant log architecture and tastefully designed interiors. The authentic mountain atmosphere, coupled with thoughtful amenities and gracious surroundings makes everyone's visit a genuinely pleasurable experience.

Under the direction of Fil-Estate Golf Development Inc, the original 18-hole par 67 layout has been upgraded to a par-69 course, following the Nicklaus design of Golden Bear International. Quite significantly, the Camp John Hay golf course now conforms to the environmental standards set by the Golf Course Commission of the USGA and other international golfing agencies.

Camp John Hay Golf & Country Club general manager Jeric Hechanova said that the new layout includes full automated irrigation and computerized turf maintenance systems as well as additional lakes and ponds that serve as catchment basins.

A sewerage treatment plant (STP) is likewise in place to protect water sources from contamination and promotes a more efficient water recycling system. With the STP, water coming from other facilities within Camp John Hay is first treated and then utilized for golf course irrigation, thereby enhancing the overall water requirement.

For inquiries, call (074)444-2131, fax (074)444-2134 or visit Camp John Hay Golf & Country Club in Loakan Road, Baguio City.

Weekend getaway at City Garden Hotel

CITY GARDEN HOTEL MAKATI IS OFFERING fantastic deals for everyone. Come and bring your loved ones for a wonderful weekend or two.

First, check-in to one of its well-appointed guest rooms that come for as low as P1,450 per person on twin-sharing basis. This already includes a sumptuous buffet breakfast at the Le Jardin.

After check-in, try out their fully-equipped gym and sauna or take a dip in their open-air swimming pool at the Roofdeck. Or better yet, you may opt to explore nearby Powerplant Mall at Rockwell or Glorietta Mall for some shopping.

For those craving for some Japanese treats, try City Garden Hotel Makati's on-going food promotion entitled, "Taste of Japan", offering delectable sushi and sashimi, appetizing soups and salads, and mouthwatering Tempura, Yakitori, Teppanyaki, Gyodon and Teriyaki.

After a day of fun activities, try the Bamboo Bliss, a signature Spa package at the newly opened Bamboo Massage & Spa at the Upper Penthouse, or a facial treatment for two for a relaxing and rejuvenating retreat.

For dinner, do not miss the Roofdeck Bar & Grill. Offering sumptuous grilled specialties and appetizers, it has the best view of the metropolis at night. A great way to end a great day!

For more details, City Garden Hotel Makati is located in Makati's restaurant strip at 7870 Makati Avenue corner Kalayaan Avenue, Makati City. For reservations or inquires, call (02) 899-1111, or its domestic toll free number 1-800-101-GARDEN (427336), or at www.citygardenhotels.com.

People, Events & Products

Real Bank increases capitalization to P1.8 B

AT THE RECENTLY HELD ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING, THE REAL Bank stockholders approved the amendment of its articles of incorporation increasing its capital base from P1 Billion to P1.8 Billion subject to the required authorization of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) and subsequent registration with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC). Two Hundred Million (P200M) has already been deposited by stockholders for this purpose. "This additional paid-up capital will help mobilize various plans and programs of the Bank for product expfansion and services development." Chairman of the Board, Jose G. Araullo, said. "As early as now we are already focusing our efforts towards serving the Filipino workers' banking and financial needs. The advocacy which we started with the kids will now be brought to their parents, relatives, teachers, to the working class-as a whole." president Barretto declared. The Real Bank celebrated its 30th year last July 17, where they showcased their accomplishments under the new management and leadership of Jose G. Araullo as chairman of the board and Alfredo S. Barretto as president. It was also during this momentous event when they recommitted to their value formation advocacy and their planned direction towards serving the Filipino workers.

Insular Life announces promotion of 3 execs

INSULAR LIFE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD AND CEO VICENTE R. AYLLÓN recently announced the promotion of three executives, Geraldine B. Alvarez to vice president, and Damaso Niño V. Careng, Jr. and Vera Victoria C. Morales to assistant vice president. Alvarez heads the company's branch management division which oversees the efficient and effective operations of the company's field offices for the delivery of quality policy and agency servicing. She earned her Bachelor of Science in Commerce Degree from the College of the Holy Spirit in Manila. She is a Certified Public Accountant. Alvarez is also a Fellow of the Life Management Institute, an Associate in Customer Service, and an Associate in Insurance Agency Administration. Careng belongs to the company's actuarial research and product development staff, which develops a competitive product portfolio for the company, as well as conducts research and analysis of various experience factors such as mortality, new business, persistency, etc. He recently passed all examination requirements for Fellowship in the Actuarial Society of the Philippines. He obtained his Bachelor of Science in Mathematics degree, cum laude, from the University of the Philippines in Diliman. Morales is the deputy head of the investment management staff which manages the company's investment portfolio to help meet its profit targets for the year. She holds a double degree on Liberal Arts major in Psychology, and Commerce major in Accounting from the De La Salle University. She is a Certified Public Accountant.

WORLD'S FOOD EXPO (WOFEX) 2006 OPENS

Wofex 2006 opened at the World Trade Center on Roxas Blvd with guest of honor Senator Francis 'Kiko' Pangallinan, together with Rep. Gilbert Remulla and former Miss Universe Margie Moran-Floreindo. Wofex 2006 continues to draw thousands of visitors from the food manufacturing and processing, hotel and restaurant, supermarket, and other sectors of the food & beverage industry. Wofex 2006 will run until Aug. 5 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. and is open only to 16 years old and above. For inquiries, log on to www.wofex.com or e-mail info@PEPGroup.com or call world trade center at 5515224. Photo during Wofex 2006 shows (from left) Senator Francis 'Kiko' Pangalinan, Margie Moran-Floreindo, Nelson Co, president and CEO of Sweetlink Inc, distributor of SiliconZone products; and Rafael 'Boydee' Dizon III, chair of Premier Events Plus (PEP) Group Inc, organizer of Wofex.

OPINION / A10

Isagani Cruz: One of the GMA administration's crafty political tactics is to obstruct efforts to ferret out gov't irregularities. But our imitative people simply don't have the guts to ape the US' indignation over Watergate

WORLD / A22

Israeli bombings kill 40 civilians in Southern Lebanon, including farm workers picking peaches and plums

NEWS / A16

9 Filipino seamen return home after being held hostage for 108 days by Somali militants; 11 other colleagues scheduled to follow

Taxpayers to foot bill in electricity rate cut

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

TAXPAYERS WILL PAY FOR THE REDUCTION OF their electric bills.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced on Friday that household and industrial customers of the Manila Electric Co. would enjoy lower power rates beginning this month.

But she did not say that the government would

TAXPAYERS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Sunday
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Sunday, August 6, 2006 ★★ 10 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 239 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Dismissed judge, elfin pals claim immortality

By Armand N. Nocum

HIS PALS, THE "IMAGINARY dwarfs" Armand, Luis and Angel, may not have impressed the justices of the Supreme Court but, according to dismissed Judge Florentino Floro Jr., he and his

DISMISSED/ A6

Busloads of Pinoys flee

JOAN BONDOC

DIRECT FROM THE WAR ZONE INTO MILLIONAIRE'S ROW: After making a run for their lives, 235 OFWs had the time of their lives on "Wowowee" on Saturday, the game show hosted by Willie Revillame (at right) at the ABS-CBN studios in Quezon City. They won a cash prize of P1 million which was to be divided equally among them. Revillame called it a welcome party befitting the country's modern-day heroes who have been caught in the crossfire of history's enmities. *(Story on Page A3.)*

9-bus convoy escapes via new route out of Beirut

By Volt Contreras and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

FLYING THE PHILIPPINE flag and with markings to signify that they were not the enemy, nine buses carrying hundreds of Filipino workers sped from Beirut yesterday using a new untried route to escape a country slowly being turned to rubble.

The convoy obtained clearance from Israeli forces before it drove out of the Lebanese capital at around 3 p.m. (Manila time) via a detour route, a day after Israeli airstrikes blasted the road and bridges used by earlier evacuees.

At least 465 overseas Filipino workers rode in the convoy on their way to safety in Damascus, Syria.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. said the 450 Filipinos in the convoy would take a chartered plane from Damascus to Manila and would arrive here either late Sunday or early Monday. The IOM early last night gave a different timetable, saying the group would be flown to Manila Monday or Tuesday.

"Before the convoy left, it secured a clearance ... from the Israeli military that it is a neutral party and a humanitarian convoy," Department of Foreign Affairs spokersperson Gilbert Asuque told the INQUIRER.

"The Philippine flag is prominently displayed on each bus, aside from proper markings on the roof."

The markings were designed to be insurance against aerial bombardment by the Israelis. *(See related story in The World, Page A22)*

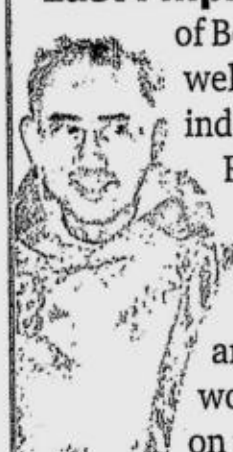
Asuque said the clearance was ob-

BUSLOADS/ A4

WHAT'S INSIDE

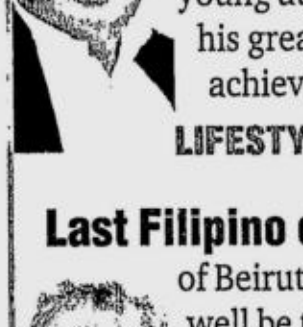
John Gokongwei tells all: The secrets of his success; why he looks young at 80 and his greatest achievement

LIFESTYLE / C1



Last Filipino out of Beirut may well be the indefatigable Fr. Agustin Advincula C.M., shepherd and miracle worker to OFWs on the run

SUNDAY MAGAZINE / 1



The Aldeguer Sisters: The sister act has not lost an ounce of its bounce and that signature head throw

SUNDAY MAGAZINE / 4

Abaca goes to your head, into your wallet and in your car

SUNDAY BIZ / B4

Greek credits Pinoys for his success, set to pay $2M for OFWs' evacuation

By Cynthia D. Balana

THIS GREEK MUST LOVE FILIPINOS SO much that in each of the two times he was married, he chose a Filipina. Now, he is willing to shell out $2 million to get Pinoys out of trouble.

Shipping magnate Antoniou Antonious has offered a ship to bring out 2,000 overseas Filipino workers marooned in Lebanon and is meeting with Vice President Noli de Castro tomorrow (Monday) to discuss his plan.

Antonious owns Olympic Gulf Tankers Co. Ltd. (OGT), a Dubai-based ship management company that operates oil and chemical tankers plying the world's oceans.

"What I am today and whatever I have today, I owe to my Filipino crews. Without them, the company would not have become so big," the 50-year-old father of seven said in an interview with the INQUIRER. "We would not have become what we are now. So I want to help the Filipinos in return."

His first five children—two sons and three daughters—sprang from his first marriage to a Filipina accountant he met in Dubai. They divorced later and Antonious is now married to a 28-year-old Filipina, a former office secretary in Dubai, with whom he has two sons, aged four and two.

He used to own a house in Novaliches.

GREEK/ A4

The gospel according to Apostle of Hope

By Michael Lim Ubac

"WE MAY BE DOWN NOW BUT ONE DAY the Philippines will rise again. And we shall all be proud that we are Filipinos."

Perhaps an impossible dream for some, but Raul Roco, who died of heart failure a year ago yesterday, spoke those words as though he had seen the future from a distance. Thus did he begin calling himself the "Apostle of Hope."

The words of the former lawmaker and education secretary and his dream of "a new Philippines under God" continue to resonate, somehow providing a ray of hope to his compatriots plagued by crises of governance and morality.

His widow Sonia has collected these quotes and other highlights of his best-known speeches during his second crack at the presidency in 2004 into a four-minute video titled "Remembering the Great Man Who Sowed the Seeds of Change."

Produced by Recoletos Communications Inc., the video was to be shown last night after a Mass at the Sta. Maria della Strada Parish Church on Katipunan Avenue, Quezon City, and possibly on television.

"Let us remember him without fanfare

ROCO/ A6

On PAL's 60th, Becky still soars

By Nikko Dizon

JESS YUSON

THEN AND NOW: That certain smile bridges the distance of time and place. The smile belongs to the 1st Filipino flight attendant on Philippine Air Lines' 1st trans-Pacific flight, Rebecca Versoza-Santos.

FROM HER PHOTOGRAPH, THE YEARS and the memories have given her the smile of a woman who has seen a beautiful world.

And Rebecca "Becky" Versoza-Santos, the only Filipino and the lone flight attendant on the first trans-Pacific flight of Philippine Airlines six decades ago, is showing how life can continue to soar at the splendid age of 82.

PAL looked for Becky in vain for the 60th anniversary of that momentous flight to America last month. It took a report in the July 31 issue of the INQUIRER for her friends and acquaintances to call both the newspaper and the airline, offering information.

In fact, Becky had not disappeared. She was simply busy living her life the same way she did when the world was young and she made her mark on it.

Now calling herself "*Lola* (Grandmother) Santos," Becky continues to travel—practicing her belief that living is making the most of every opportunity that comes one's way.

Along with celebrities like Dame Judi Dench, Angela Lansbury, Jessica Tandy, Coretta Scott King, Gloria Steinem and Liz Smith, she is featured in the 2002 coffeetable book "Wise Women" by renowned American photographer Joyce Tenneson.

ON PAL'S/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent over the eastern section of Visayas, Bicol region and Central Luzon.The rest of the country will have cloudy skies.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY MEL LAWRENCE DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/08/05/06

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

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SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Activist-pastor shot dead in Albay

By Ephraim Aguilar
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

DARAGA, ALBAY—A PASTOR OF THE UNITED Methodist Church who was also a member of a leftist farmers' group was shot dead by about 10 masked gunmen outside his home in Barangay Malobago here Thursday night, Daraga police said.

The victim, identified as Isaias Sta. Rosa, 47, was found dead beside a creek with another dead man who also had gunshot wounds lying beside him, they added.

The police identified the other fatality as Cpl. Lordger Pastrana of the Philippine Army who was believed to be one of the men who had earlier forced their way into Sta. Rosa's house, according to PO2 Alona Gallanero of the Bicol regional police public information office.

Found on Pastrana were two .45-cal. pistols, a mobile phone and a wrist watch, Gallanero said.

Investigators said the suspects first entered the house of Jonathan Sta. Rosa, 26, the pastor's younger brother, before going to the victim's house located in the same compound.

Robbery-homicide

Police entered the case as a "robbery with homicide" in the blotter and disclosed that Jonathan was robbed of P700 in cash and some cell phones, while Isaias was robbed of one laptop computer and five cell phones.

Isaias was a member of the farmers' group Kilusang Magbubukid ng Bicol (Farmers' Movement in Bicol) under the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas (Farmers' Movement of the Philippines), Carl Ala, KMP spokesperson, said.

With Sta. Rosa's death, the number of militants killed since 2001 had reached 245, by the INQUIRER's own count. Karapatan, a human rights group, put the number at 720.

Jonathan said the gunman found dead beside his slain brother was among those who entered their house at about 8:30 p.m.

He said he was puzzled why the gunman, who was still holding a .45-cal. pistol, was also killed.

By creek

Jonathan added that the bodies of the pastor and the soldier were found beside a creek several minutes after gunshots were heard and the gunmen had left.

Still shaken by the experience, Jonathan narrated that he was preparing supper when the gunmen entered his house, which was beside the pastor's. He said another brother, Ray, arrived from work at the same time.

"I thought they were robbers because they asked me to give them my cell phone. Then I saw Ray, who was about to enter the house. The intruders ordered him to lie down on the ground and someone barked at me to do the same," Jonathan said.

Other residents robbed

He said he found out later that the men also took away the cell phones of residents of several houses in the neighborhood before coming to his house.

He said the armed men brought them outside the house and asked about the whereabouts of Isaias. They were hit with the butt of a gun as they were being questioned, he said.

Later, Jonathan said, he was ordered to knock at the door of the pastor's house. Once inside, he and Ray along with his sister-in-law and four nephews and nieces, were herded into a room.

He said the gunmen found Isaias in an adjoining room. He was asked to identify himself, beaten up and taken out of the house and brought to the nearby creek, he said.

Military men?

Jonathan said several minutes after the masked armed men left with his brother, two sets of gunfire were heard from the direction of the creek.

Jonathan said he believed the gunmen were from the military, because of their bearing, the fatigues they were wearing, the high-powered arms they carried and their combat boots.

He said that on two occasions men in military uniform, with their nameplates hidden from view, had searched the house of the victim.

Brig. Gen. Arsenio Arugay, 901st Infantry Brigade commander based in Villahermosa, Daraga, Albay, said officers were still investigating why Pastrana was in the area at the time.

He said Pastrana was assigned to the Public Affairs Office of the 9th Infantry Division based in Pili, Camarines Sur, but was told that the soldier had not yet reported to the unit.

He said it was unfair that some people claimed that the killers were military men, just because Pastrana's body was found near that of Sta. Rosa's.

Woman Bayan Muna leader laid to rest

By Desiree Caluza and Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—ABOUT 7,000 PEOPLE, most of them wearing white, yesterday gathered in Tabuk, Kalinga, to bury a Bayan Muna official who was murdered on July 31.

The burial of Alice Omengan-Claver, Bayan Muna coordinator in Kalinga, turned into a protest action against the spate of political killings nationwide.

In a message during the 8 a.m. funeral Mass at the St. Thomas Parish, Alice Claver's husband, Dr. Constancio "Chandu" Claver, Bayan Muna chair in Kalinga, described her as "a loving mother, a good wife, and a very good partner," especially in their work in nongovernment and people's organizations in the Cordillera.

The Mass was attended by the Clavers' relatives, friends and colleagues from Kalinga, Mountain Province, Baguio and Metro Manila, Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño, and members of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance, Bayan Muna, Kalinga Medical Society and other religious and militant groups.

After the Mass, the mourners proceeded to the spot in Barangay Bulanao where Alice, 42, and her husband were attacked, and held a brief program there.

They then set off on a 3-km march to the public cemetery in Bulanao for the burial.

Alice and Chandu Claver had just taken their daughter, Alex, 11, to school at 6:45 a.m. on July 31 when they were attacked by armed men on the national highway in Bulanao.

Alice died at the Kalinga Provincial Hospital, where Chandu was treated for multiple gunshot wounds. Their other daughter, Cassandra, 7, was unhurt.

Beverly Longid, vice chair of the Cordillera Human Rights Alliance, said the group was holding President Macapagal-Arroyo responsible for the harassment and killing of activists and other people critical of her administration.

The group also called on Philippine National Police officials to relieve Kalinga police director Supt. Pedro Ramos to pave the way for a credible investigation of the attack on the Clavers.

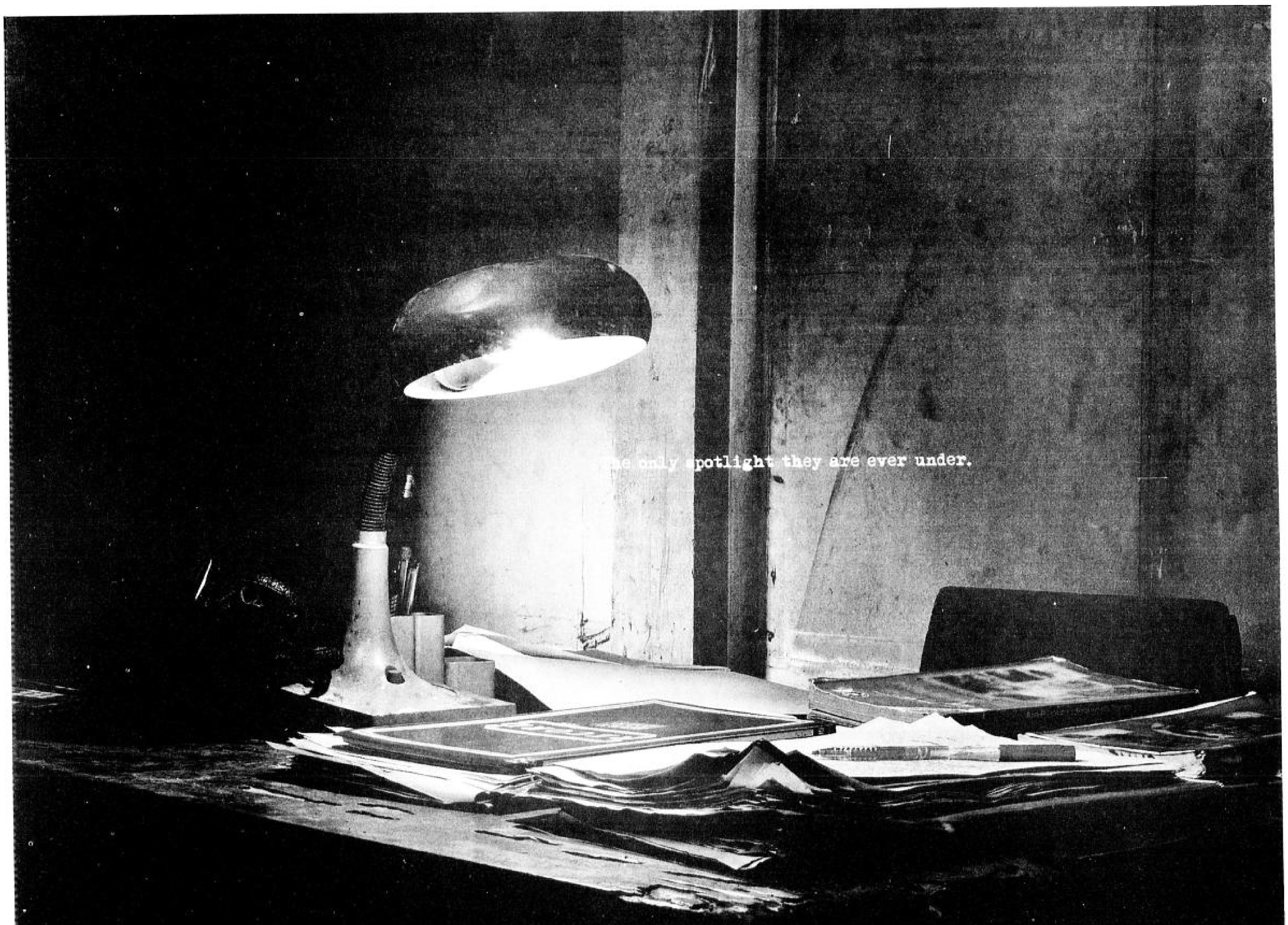
"We are calling for the immediate relief of Ramos because people here have a very strong suspicion that the police are behind the ambush. There will be no impartial investigation until he is relieved. No one will have the courage to come out and testify because of fear of the police," Casiño told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

The party-list representative described Ramos as the "Palparan of Kalinga" and attributed to the latter the rising number of attacks on activists and residents in the province.

It was a reference to Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division covering Central Luzon, who has been tagged the "butcher" of activists.

Ramos said he was willing to be relieved of his post to allow the investigation to proceed. He had earlier denied that the police had a hand in the attack on the Clavers.

"I would be very happy to be relieved. I was never happy in Kalinga in the first place because there have been killings left and right. It is hell there," Ramos said in a phone interview.



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Gov't forces overrun terror camps but fail to nab anyone

JOLO, SULU—GOVERNMENT SOLDIERS hunting two key Indonesian suspects in the 2002 Bali bombings have overrun a rebel jungle camp abandoned by Jemaah Islamiyah terrorists and Abu Sayyaf bandits after several days of fighting, officials said yesterday.

But the Indonesians and most of their Abu Sayyaf allies escaped, an official said.

The military suspect that the camp in Mt. Tumatangis, Barangay Kagay, Indanan town, was being used by the Jemaah Islamiyah and their Abu Sayyaf allies for explosives and bomb-making training, said Maj. Mabini Adbuhadi, civil relations officer of Task Force Comet.

The military earlier said seven Abu Sayyaf members were killed in a major three-day land, air and sea operation against known Abu Sayyaf positions on Jolo. Three other suspected Abu Sayyaf members were arrested as they tried to flee by boat.

The captured training camp is located in the foothills of Mt. Bud Kapok. Army infantry as well as Marine forces were involved in the assault, which Filipino officers earlier said made use of intelligence provided by United States military advisers operating in Mindanao.

Abdujadi said the camp had fortified bunkers, ground shelters and sleeping quarters and was allegedly being occupied by JI and Abu Sayyaf forces since 2000.

Capt. Michael Duquid, chief of Task Force Comet's explosives and ordnance division, said components of explosives like 81-mm mortars, detonating fuses and at least six kilos of shrapnel, were recovered from the camp.

The focus of the offensive was Abu Sayyaf chief Khaddafy Janjalani and key JI operatives Umar Patek and Dulmatin who are wanted in connection with the 2002 Bali nightclub attacks.

Authorities suspect that Janjalani's group may be hosting Patek and Dulmatin.

The US government has offered up to $10 million for the capture of Dulmatin and $1 million for Patek for their roles in the Bali bombings which left more than 200 mostly foreign tourists dead.

Regional intelligence officials say Dulmatin, an electronics and bomb expert trained in al-Qaida camps in Afghanistan, is a senior JI member believed to have triggered the bombs. Patek allegedly helped coordinate the attack. *Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau and AFP*

OFWs win ₱1M on 'Wowowee'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THE CONTROVERSIAL ABS-CBN NOONTIME game show "Wowowee" yesterday hosted a "welcome party," as host Willie Revillame called it, for 235 Filipino evacuees from Lebanon who collectively won a cash prize of P1 million.

"We just wanted them to have fun," Revillame said.

The OFWs, who had fled war-torn Lebanon, were transported by the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) in five buses from its office on Harrison St. in Pasay City to the ABS-CBN studios in Quezon City.

"They were the 30th batch to arrive from Lebanon," said Cynthia Jordan, production unit manager of "Wowowee."

Revillame said this particular group of OFWs was staying at the Owwa halfway house while waiting to receive the fare money for the boat ride home to the Visayas and Mindanao.

"Their plane, which arrived 9 p.m. on Friday, was delayed. That's why Willie only got to meet with them the following morning after breakfast, at the studio," Jordan said.

Yesterday's P1-million jackpot, which was donated by realtor Delfin Lee of Globe Asiatic, will be divided among the 235 OFWs who won P1,125,000 in the "Bigatin," "Willie of Fortune" and "Pasalog" game portions.

"They will get over P3,000 each. They will also receive gift packs from our sponsors. These OFWs didn't get to bring home anything from Lebanon. Not a single centavo. So we thought of throwing a party for them, to make them feel like a Kapamilya (part of the family)," said Revillame.

According to Revillame, this was the second time the show had hosted a party for the evacuees.

"On Wednesday, 272 evacuees won P1,390,000. That's P5,000 each, plus gift packs," he said.

"They came straight from the airport. They arrived in Manila Tuesday night. I met up with them at the Owwa office. When they saw me, they started crying. They all have touching stories to tell," he said.

Revillame said the idea of hosting a welcome party for the evacuees was his idea.

"I was having a haircut when I saw footage of the evacuees on [the ABS-CBN news show] TV Patrol," he recounted.

"My two companions told me that inviting OFWs would be a good concept for the show. But yesterday's episode will be the last. I don't want to do another show like this. We want to avoid controversy. We don't want OFWs to depend on this alone," he said.

He insisted that this was not a public relations campaign.

"We are not doing this to promote ourselves," he said in Filipino.

The TV show is still fighting a court case over the tragic incident last February in which 71 people queuing for tickets to the show were killed in a stampede.

MILF: We'll go after terror funders

SULTAN KUDARAT, MAGUINDANAO—The separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front said it was willing to run after members of the International Islamic Relief Organization in Mindanao (IIRO), a Saudi-based organization which allegedly serves as a fundraiser for the Abu Sayyaf bandit group and is linked to the al-Qaida international terror group.

"We are not sure if they are still in Mindanao because it's not our concern. But if there's a request channeled through our peace negotiators, we are willing to help in arresting these foreigners behind the operation of IIRO," said Ghadzali Jaafar, the MILF vice chair for political affairs.

The MILF has an existing agreement with the government that it would help run after criminal elements and terror groups in the areas where the MILF operates in Mindanao.

The United States recently moved to financially incapacitate branches of the IIRO for allegedly helping to bankroll the terrorist acts of al-Qaida, the Jemaah Islamiyan regional terror group and the Abu Sayyaf.

The IIRO made its presence felt in Central Mindanao in the late 1980s when it delivered relief assistance to thousands of residents displaced by skirmishes triggered by the MILF in nearby Pikit town.

It also built an orphanage in Simuay, Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao, and provided funds for the salaries of Arabic teachers or local institutions providing health care for children orphaned by wars.

But Ustadz Mohamad Farid Adas, assistant secretary for madari (Arabic for schools) education in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said the region has had no institutional engagement with IIRO.

Adas said he had heard that asatid (Arabic teachers) who used to receive financial help from the organization for working as voluntary teachers in private madari, were complaining that their monthly allowances had been cut off abruptly.

A source told the INQUIRER that this was because of the stricter rules now imposed by the central bank's Anti-Money Laundering Council on private financial donations going to local Islamic institutions.

A Muslim official, who asked not to be identified, said it would be best for the Arabic teachers to "collectively" declare with the AMLC the total amount they expected monthly from foreign Islamic organizations as payment for education-related or humanitarian undertakings.

Ustadz Esmael Demarof of the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy said the IIRO was no longer active in providing assistance to local Muslim communities since the group's name surfaced in 2003 as one of those to be named in a class suit that relatives of the 9/11 victims were filing against Islamic organizations.

"On the part of the people of Mindanao, the organization has helped them. However, they don't have an idea what's behind the organization," Jaafar said.

"Even us, we don't know the group is a front of the al-Qaida," he added.

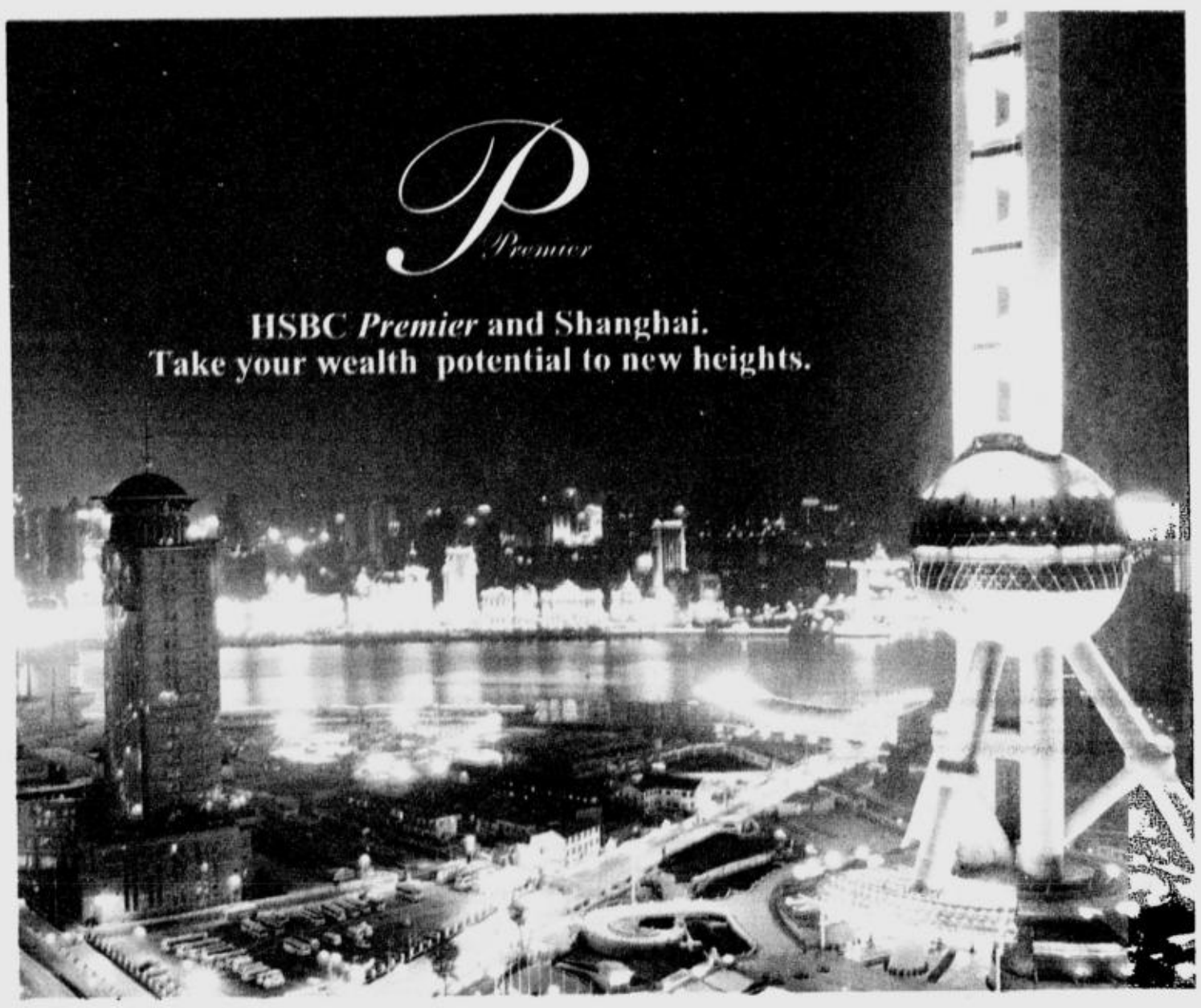
Abdul Syed Lingga, executive director of the Institute of Bangsamoro Studies, said the IIRO used to fund a medical consultation clinic here but has since stopped operations.

"The information about the IIRO funding terrorist operations in the Philippines came from the government intelligence community. The worse problem [is] they can't validate the reports," Lingga said.

"Now, we have no idea who is telling the truth," he added.

The Philippine unit of the IIRO was founded by Muhammad Jamal Khalifah, a brother-in-law of al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden. Khalifa has been identified as a senior al-Qaida member.

Khalifa had a Filipino Muslim wife who helped run the orphanage in Sultan Kudarat, but she later left to join her husband in Saudi Arabia. *Jeoffrey Maitem and Nash B. Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



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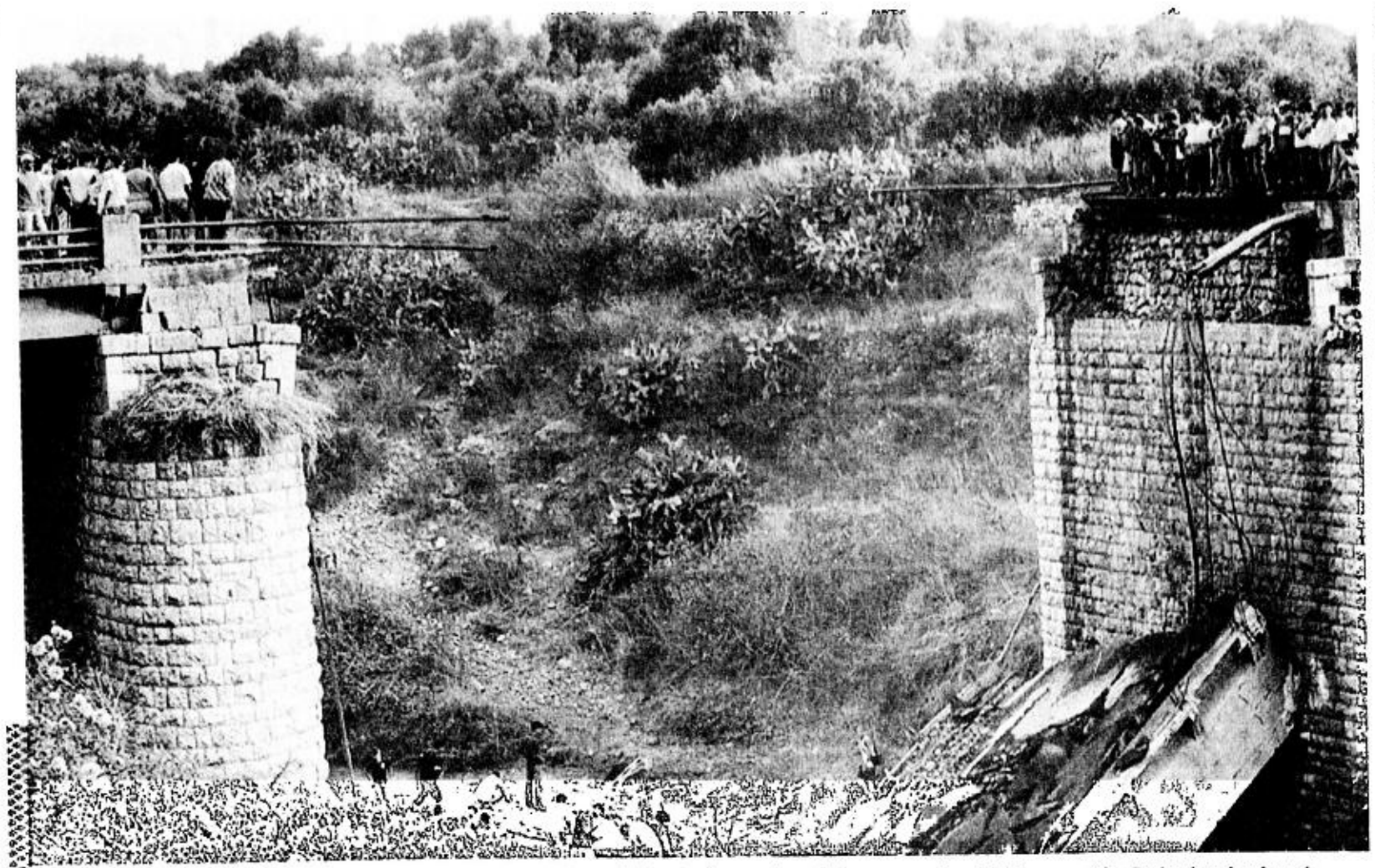
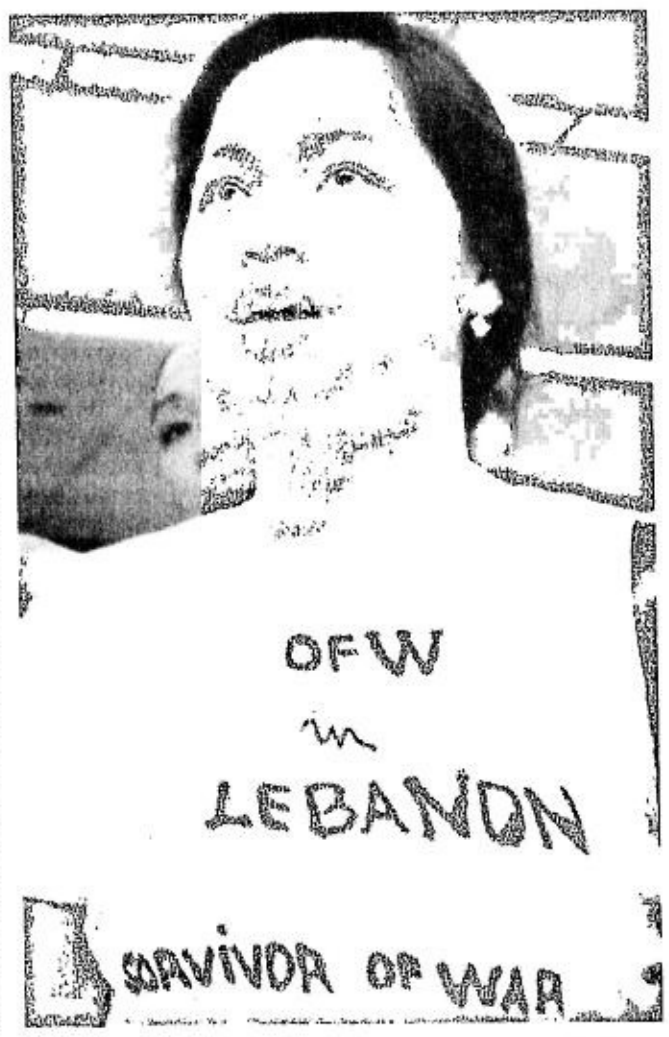


FALLEN BRIDGE: Israel air strikes on Wednesday hit this highway bridge in the northern Lebanese region of Akkar near the Syrian border. Israel struck again after a lull of several days even as the United Nations was rushing a Security Council resolution to end the three-week-old war.. AFP



'SURVIVOR OF WAR': Alona Cornel wrote that herself on her shirt en route home to Manila with much gratitude. JESS YUSON

THE WOUNDED: Priscilla Collado Roneto is among the arrivals on Thursday night—450 OFWs—the largest batch of evacuees so far. She jumped from her employers' house after they refused to let her go. She fractured her right leg. JESS YUSON

Busloads of Pinoys flee via new route

From page A1

tained with the help of the International Organization for Migration, a US-funded group helping in the evacuation of foreign nationals from the war zone.

Ironically, as the Filipinos finally hit the road again in Beirut, the IOM regional office in Manila said the United Nations had actually already given a "security clearance" for any ship bringing Filipinos out of Lebanon to neighboring Cyprus.

The Philippines has been considering evacuating the OFWs by sea after Israeli forces fighting Hezbollah militants bombed the route they were using to get to the Syrian capital of Damascus.

IOM project officer Ida Mae Fernandez said the UN clearance meant that the sea route "no longer posed a high risk" for any vessels carrying evacuees.

Should the "sea" option still be taken, it is possible that the IOM would ferry Filipinos along with other nationalities on the same ship, she said.

Earlier yesterday, the DFA and IOM announced the cancellation of a Boeing 747 flight that would have brought another batch of OFWs to Manila today.

More than 2,600 Filipinos comprising 21 batches have returned home since the three-week-old war began, according to the DFA. The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) said its count showed 30 batches had arrived.

Although the occupancy at the Beirut evacuation center had only reached a peak of 800, Conejos said the government was preparing for a worst-case scenario by activating a new evacuation center in Tripoli.

With the arrival of the 450 OFWs, Conejos said the government team would have evacuated a total of 3,102 Filipinos on 32 flights and 60 buses.

"I would like to tell the public not to worry anymore because we have resumed the movement of OFWs after this was delayed Friday by the bombing of one bridge," Conejos said in a press briefing.

"We found an alternate road to bypass the bridge in the mountain area. The evacuation route to Syria is now back to normal and we are now putting the finishing touches on alternate routes just in case one of the roads is again bombed."

5 sea routes

Should Israel step up its attacks and render routes to Syria inaccessible, Conejos said the government had drawn up five sea routes to ensure that the evacuation runs smoothly:

- From Beirut to Latakia, Syria's biggest port, using a catamaran (overseen by Foreign Undersecretary Raphael Seguis);
- From Beirut to Larnaca port in Cyprus (Philippine Ambassador Rigoberto Tiglao);
- From Beirut to Mersin, Turkey (Philippine Ambassador Bahnarim A. Guinomla);
- From Beirut to Port Said, Egypt (Philippine Ambassador Petronila P. Garcia), and
- From Beirut direct to Manila either via a ship docked in the Mediterranean Sea or Philippine ships allowed to cross international seas.

Conejos said the Latakia and Larnaca routes were the most feasible while the alternative routes to Turkey and Egypt would only be taken if Syria was dragged into the war.

Blockaded sea

The Philippines has to seek clearance from Israel before it could send off its evacuees either by land or sea.

"The Israeli Navy has blockaded the sea lanes and no ship can leave unless cleared by its navy. That is what we are doing even for our land routes," Conejos said.

Local shipping line owners have said their fleets were made for inter-island shipping and were limited to cargo transport in the open seas. If local ship owners send their ships to Beirut, Conejos said that these could only be used to ferry Filipinos to nearby ports and not directly to Manila.

Conejos gave an assurance that evacuating the rest of the OFWs would not be a problem considering that four "collection" centers have been activated in Lebanon and Filipinos had access to both land and sea routes "as long as we get clearance from Israel."

DFA, Owwa hotlines

The DFA has established a situation room on the third floor of its main office as well as a 24-hour hotline (834-4488, 834-3333 and 834-4996) to complement the Owwa hotline (551-6646 up to 48).

With the departure of the 450 OFWs, Conejos said another batch of 300 Filipinos was set to leave for Manila.

He said the number of Filipinos staying at the evacuation centers had increased, especially after Israel intensified its bombings.

On standby

He said Filipinos in Israel had been placed on standby, with the northern part close to the Lebanon border—where most of the Hezbollah bombs are being dropped—divided into two zones in the contingency plan.

Conejos said they were ready to move the estimated 3,000 OFWs in the area anytime to Tel Aviv.

Speaking in an earlier forum before announcing that the flights out of Beirut had resumed, Conejos told reporters that the Philippine team had found an alternative route but that it was under surveillance by Israeli helicopters and could also be subjected to bomb attacks.

"Israeli choppers were seen conducting surveillance in the area. They might be looking for suspicious movement (from the Hezbollah)," Conejos said.

Conejos said he was stunned that the Israelis had bombed the bridges on the OFWs' escape route because they were the same bridges pointed out by Israelis to Filipino diplomats as secure routes.

Conejos, however, said that the military objective remained Israel's top priority.

Some had suggested it might be better for the OFWs to stick with their employers rather than be caught in the crossfire.

Street fighting ruled out

"They are the responsibility of their employers, who know where to go or what to do to remain safe. The employers know what's best for our OFWs," said Emmanuel Geslani, a consultant of several Manila-based recruitment agencies.

However, Geslani said the OFWs should also keep in touch with the embassy, be aware of what was happening in the communities around them and make their own personal evaluations.

Geslani ruled out the possibility of street fighting in Beirut or indiscriminate bombardment.

So long as OFWs do not work in the house or office of a Hezbollah militia or supporter, he or she is safe, he said.

Five labor department officials were on their way to Lebanon to bolster the Philippine Overseas Labor Office in Beirut and help speed up evacuation operations, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion said.

He said that since majority of the OFWs in Lebanon were women, his department was sending female social workers and administrative staff to the region. *With reports from Norman Bordadora, Cynthia D. Balana and Jerome Aning*

Greek credits Pinoys for his success, set to pay $2M for OFWs' evacuation

From page A1

Antonious said most of his friends and employees in Dubai and Greece were Filipinos, which explains why he has a soft heart for Filipinos, not just the women.

90% Filipino crew

"Filipinos are the only ones interested in the way I want to work. The chemistry is there," he said.

According to Antonious, 80 percent, or 300, of his 500 seafarers at OGT are Filipinos. He and his children eat Filipino food.

He is in the Philippines looking for a shipping office he plans to put up here His base of operations is Dub

Two similar cultures

Antonious finds similarities in Greek and Filipino cultures and geography. Greece has 3,000 islands and the hilippines over 7,000. Both p oples, he says, love enjoyment and entertainment.

His two sons from his previous marriage are with him here: Ronnel, 31, also married to a Filipina, is with the Greek Army while Lab-by, 23, single, is a captain in a maritime academy in Greece. Both look more Filipino than Greek.

Like many rags-to-riches sagas, Antonious was born to poor Greek parents who migrated to Johannesburg, South Africa, in 1963 when he was only eight years old.

"In South Africa, I saw the problems there and the reality of the poor people," he said.

Feeling compassion

Last week, Antonious was introduced to lawyer Jesse Andres, De Castro's chief of staff, by his friend, lawyer Tarcisio Calilung. Over lunch with Andres, he talked about his desire to help evacuate the Filipinos in Lebanon by sea if flying home 30,000 of them would be difficult.

"I saw on TV that Filipino evacuees are waiting in a church. I feel like them, you know, whenever I see a Filipino, 'kawawa' (exacting compassion). I feel sorry for the children, for their families here."

If Task Force Lebanon would accept his offer, Antonious said, he would ask an association of shipowners in Greece to help defray the cost of hiring a ship.

'Will shoulder all'

"In Greece, we have lots of ships and the biggest fleet in the world belongs to a Greek owner," he said. "Most of our seamen are Filipinos so I'd like the shipowners to participate in the expenses. But if they will not wish to participate in the expenses, then I will shoulder all."

But he is confident that the shipowners and the Greek government would help, in the same way that they helped the tsunami victims in Sri Lanka by sending a passenger ship full of doctors and medical personnel.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in the 1990s, Antonious' help was sought by the Philippine ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. Antonious hired 20 buses and sent these to the Kuwaiti border to evacuate OFWs to Bahrain. The transfer in several batches took 16 days. From Bahrain, the OFWs were flown to Manila.

Antonious has helped in other ways. In Dubai, he has been financing a Filipino basketball team during tournaments there.

"Some people in Dubai buy a pleasure boat and spend their fortune on a pleasure boat. I am not like that. I know how to earn money and I know how to spend it but in the right way," said Antonious

Low profile

According to Philippine diplomats who know him, Antonious' generosity has endeared him to the media in Greece, Sri Lanka and Dubai. In the Philippines, however, he would rather keep a low profile for security reasons.

"I fear not for my safety but for the safety of my children. That is why I keep a low profile whenever I am here. I do not want to expose myself here," Antonious said.

To Antonious, people should always accept the kind of life that is given them.

Advice to media

"This has been my view since I was five years old. The character of a person never changes, and that is what I'm fighting for all the time," he said.

Antonious believes Philippine media should tone down and help the government in times of crisis, such as the one now facing OFWs in Lebanon.

"I saw Sri Lankans in Lebanon, and there are also 30,000 of them, but they are not doing much scandal. They took them to North Lebanon, then to Syria and there's no problem there. I want you to help the people there in Lebanon. You reporters, by writing something, you can make the situation calm or worse," he said.

Antonious said both the Philippine government and the OFWs would lose if all of the more than 30,000 Filipino workers were plucked out of Lebanon.

Money owed

"It is not the entire Lebanon that is being bombed," he said. "I had worked in Lebanon and I have many friends in Lebanon. You must not make the people panic. The more panic you are making, the more struggles for the Filipinos. The parents are calling them, and they are panicking. They would say, 'come back, come back,' and there's more panic."

He added: "The OFWs will lose a lot of money because they have money in the banks there, and their employers owe them money. I know the Lebanese traditional payments—three or four months delay in payments. So they will come here, all the more poor."

Correction

IN THE AUG. 5 ISSUE, Metro story—"'Maximo' is critic's choice as best film for 2006"—misstated that the recipients of the Best Cinematography Award were Chuck Ali and Jonna Roxas. Nap Jamir III won the award. Kanakan Balintagos' name was also misspelled.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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ON MT. MAYON

Lava flow slows, changes direction

LEGAZPI CITY—AFTER A FIERCE SHOW THE previous day, lava flowing down restive Mayon volcano had "slowed down in general," the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said yesterday.

Phivolcs attributed the slowdown to the gentle slopes and change in the directions of the flow.

"Some lava fragments that were previously flowing into the upper Bonga Gully and Mabinit channel are now flowing into other gullies in the southeast sector," it said.

On Friday, the lava trails which started from Mayon Volcano's crater were recorded as the longest ever, going beyond the distance lava had flowed in past eruptions in the last three decades, Phivolcs said.

The main lava trail along the Bonga/Mabinit channel in the southeast sector advanced by 90 meters downslope of the six-km radius Permanent Danger Zone boundary, it added.

Eduardo Laguerta, resident volcanologist of Phivolcs-Legazpi, said the lava flow, based on the nature of Mayon's magma, was around 1,000 degrees Celsius or 10 times the boiling point of water. The flow was crawling at about one meter per hour, he said.

"This is a little slower than last week because the lava has now reached low-lying areas after cascading down the volcano's slopes," Laguerta added.

The flowing lava has attracted villagers and tourists, who have been taking a closer look since last week despite the risks.

People were barred from entering the high-risk zones on Wednesday after the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council strictly ordered "no human activity" within the southeast quadrant, site of the main lava flow.

Security teams put up checkpoints starting Wednesday night to prevent the public from going beyond the danger zone boundaries.

Brig. Gen. Arsenio Arugay, 901st Infantry Brigade commander, said some 70 soldiers were dispatched to the area to caution residents and tourists about coming near the lava.

The Phivolcs warned fires could start and spread to upper Mabinit and Bonga.

It said that although the lava flow was moving slowly, it had entered vegetated areas and produced some small fires as it scorched trees and shrubs.

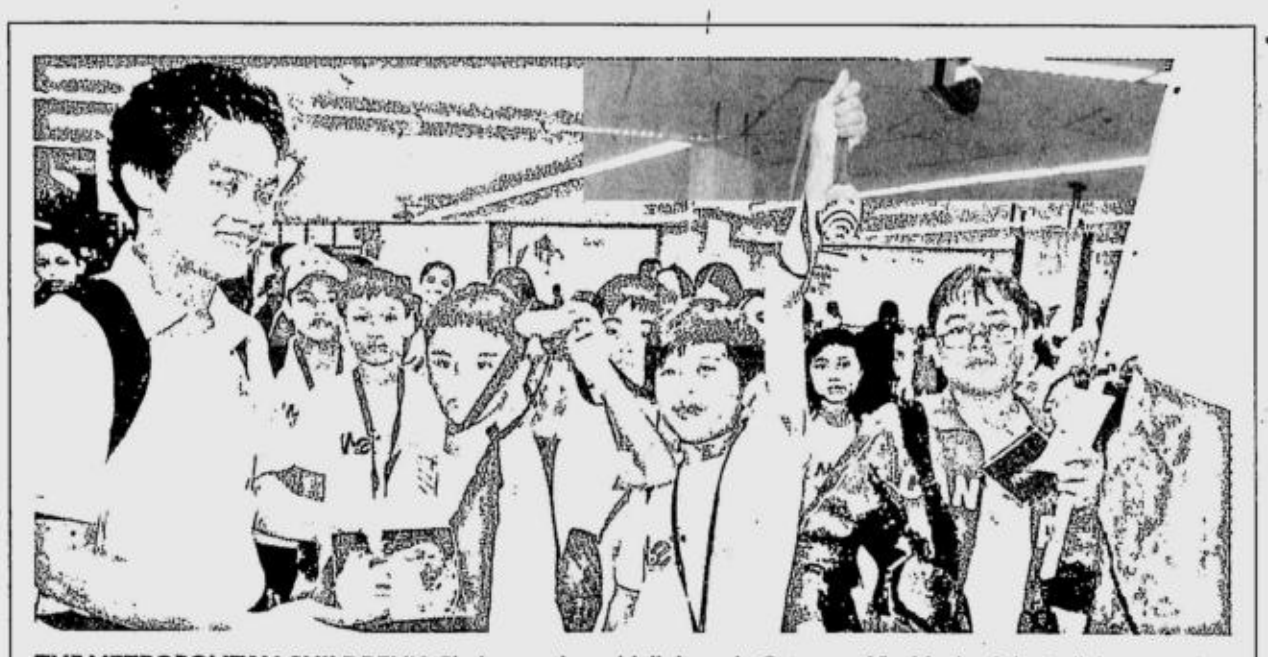
Phivolcs advised residents living within 8-km radius of the southeast sector of the volcano—especially those in the municipalities of Daraga and Sto. Domingo and Legazpi City—to be alert and be prepared for evacuation if the volcanic activity worsened.

Meanwhile, alert level 3 remained hoisted over the Mayon area.

Sulfur dioxide was emitted yesterday at the rate of 4,034 tons, compared to Friday's 2,965 tons.

Mayon's continuing restiveness was evident from the 326 tremor episodes recorded yesterday, which were caused by lava fragments tumbling down the upper and middle southeast slopes facing Barangays Miisi in Daraga town and Mabinit, Bonga and Buyoan in Legazpi City.

Seventeen volcanic earthquakes were also recorded, said Phivolcs, suggesting that magma was ascending. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*



THE METROPOLITAN CHILDREN'S Choir won the gold diploma in Category 18 – Music of the Religions – and a silver diploma in Category 1 – Children's Choirs Competition – in the first round of the 4th World Choir Games held in Xiamen, China, on July 15-20. This qualified the group for the second or Olympic Round where it came in third place for the bronze medal. The group was organized by William Lloyd Cordero, choirmaster, and some parents at the Church of the Risen Lord at UP in 2004 and has performed at various schools and churches, on TV and has given several concerts. The choir will release its first album entitled "Colors of the Rainbow." JESS YUSON

Opposition not ready to throw in the towel in impeachment case

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE OPPOSITION MAY BE "STARING DEfeat in the eye" in its impeachment bid against President Macapagal-Arroyo but it's not throwing in the towel yet, a leading opposition lawmaker said yesterday.

Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano said the opposition would continue to press the impeachment complaints against the President—including questions about her legitimacy—even if the House of Representatives eventually junked the complaints.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said on Friday he expected the President's allies in the House to employ all legal and political maneuvers to ensure the death of the new impeachment bid within two weeks.

But Cayetano said the Arroyo administration would be "courting extra-constitutional moves for justice" if the impeachment process were manipulated to have the complaints dismissed.

"Even while staring defeat in the eye in the impeachment [bid] versus [the President], we continue to pursue the truth, hold her and her administration accountable, and ask for justice," Cayetano said, adding:

"Closure comes from justice. Justice comes either from democratic institutions and processes or the barrel of the gun. We don't believe in taking the law into our own hands; we believe in democratic processes."

Twin lessons

According to Cayetano, the public will only accept "a credible verdict" if the impeachment process "is not abused and evidence is heard and considered."

"This administration knows the twin lessons of the people's hunger for good government and of abusing constitutional processes. These are the lessons of Edsa I and II," he said.

"That is why the administration has been solidifying links with the military and local governments at the risk of destroying institutions. It fears a people's revolt."

Cayetano said the country would only have "closure" if the President and other administration officials were "willing to be transparent and accountable for their use of power."

"Closure will not be had if all oppositionists keep quiet and don't say a thing. Closure will come when the President faces the issue squarely and either proves her innocent or faces the consequence of her guilt. That's the only way," he said.

"Everyone wants to move on, wants to focus on development and wants to be inspired by our leaders. But that is not possible unless our leaders are willing to be transparent and accountable for their use of power."

Aug. 8

The House committee on justice chaired by Rep. Simeon Datumanong is scheduled to start its hearing on Aug. 8 to choose which of the eight similar impeachment complaints lodged by various citizens' groups will be tackled.

The committee is assigned to ascertain the form and substance of an impeachment complaint and, if warranted, conduct full-blown hearings.

It has at most 60 session days within which to come up with a report—whether for or against the impeachment complaint—which may be upheld or reversed by the chamber in plenary session.

Tourist arrivals up 10.4% in first half, says DOT

By Jerome Aning

AT LEAST 1.42 MILLION FOREIGN tourists visited the country in the first six months of the year, 10.4 percent more than came in the same period last year, the Department of Tourism said yesterday.

Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said first semester statistics showed 1,420,040 foreign visitors visited the country, with 220,000 arrivals each month. Last year's first semester had 1,285,762 visitors.

Durano said the United States, South Korea and Japan accounted for more than half (55.7 percent) of the arrivals. American tourists numbered 308,799, followed by South Koreans, 267,417, and Japanese, 215,273.

Other countries in the DOT's list of top 10 travel markets in terms of volume were China, Taiwan, Australia, Hong Kong, Canada, Singapore and the United Kingdom, each recording arrival numbers ranging from 32,000 to 65,000.

In the list, China posted the highest visitor growth rate, with 64,584 arrivals, a 41-percent increase from last year's 45,789.

From Southeast Asia, Malaysians were the top visitors, with nearly 25,000 visitor—an increase of 28 percent.

There were fewer visitors from Hong Kong, Nepal, Portugal and Nigeria this year but more from Nauru, Colombia, Peru, Russia, Poland, Papua New Guinea, Brunei, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iran and the United Arab Emirates.

Meanwhile, programs launched by the DOT early this year to lure to the country expatriates, Filipino residents abroad and those of Filipino descent seemed to have paid off with overseas Filipino arrivals (77,358) rising by 25.5 percent.

The arrival figures were culled from arrival and departure cards at the airports and shipping manifests for the first semester.

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MR. AND MRS: Rebecca and Capt. Miguel Santos, married for less than 20 years, had three children. When she was widowed at 39, their youngest child was only 10 months old. CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

UP CLOSE, Rebecca Versoza-Santos is still a beauty at 82.

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG. The eyes, that smile again, said it all: Becky was in love with dentist-pilot Miguel Santos.

On PAL's 60th, Becky still soars

From page A1

"I am so happy, proud and thankful that I was given the opportunity to be part of history," Becky told the INQUIRER in a phone interview on Thursday from her home in Chelsea, New York.

"We were the first airline [in Asia] that crossed the Pacific, and it was my flight," she said with pride.

As a flight attendant, she has been to "almost all the continents, and got paid doing it."

An education graduate of the University of the Philippines, Becky learned that PAL was looking for flight attendants from a colleague in the US Air Force, where she had briefly worked.

"I applied not so much because I would get to travel but because I thought [the work] was exciting and fun and challenging," she said.

Being 5'1" tall (the minimum height requirement then was five feet) and fluent in English and Spanish, she got the job.

Becky and a classmate from UP, Editha Gonzales, were chosen to serve on PAL's first revenue domestic flight that took off on Valentine's Day in 1946.

Five months later, on July 31, she became the lone cabin crew member for PAL's first flight across the Pacific.

Only woman on board

Becky was only 22 then, and the only woman on the flight.

It was her responsibility to ensure that 40 war-weary American soldiers were comfortable throughout their two-day journey home to the United States.

She described it as "a good, relaxed flight" despite the DC-4 plane's having to make four refueling stops.

Her passengers were "very nice, kind—and all were gentlemen." And she enjoyed serving them even if the equipment on board, like the food heater, was "nothing high-tech."

Training programs

Becky's work on that flight included having to manually pump air mattresses for the passengers to sleep on.

"Me? I slept on the bucket seat," she said.

Becky subsequently taught at PAL's training school for flight attendants, was sent to Japan to help train Japan Airlines' first cabin crew, and wrote PAL's first manual for flight attendants.

She also joined most of PAL's first flights to a country—called "survey flights"—so that she could write a manual for flight attendants designed for that flight and destination.

After a decade as a flight attendant, Becky was assigned to head PAL's baggage claims department.

"It was a beautiful experience to help people find their lost luggage. Just imagine all the valuable, important things they have in those bags," she said.

By locating lost bags, she managed to save the airline from getting sued by angry passengers.

Blind date

It was during Becky's stint at PAL that she met Miguel Santos, an Air Force pilot who fought in the war and later moved to the airline to work as its chief dentist.

The blind date set up by a fellow flight attendant led to marriage.

"Jonathan Gesmundo (editor of PAL's corporate magazine) asked me if a pilot had courted me. Well, I married one!" Becky said, giggling.

The union was blessed with three children—Caesar, now the chaplain of the University of Asia and the Pacific; Gary, a mining engineer; and Rebecca, a teacher at the United Nations International School (Unis) in New York.

In 1963, when Becky was just 39, her husband died "from too much smoking." Caesar and Gary were then 8 and 6 years old, and Rebecca, 10 months.

Big crush

Becky never remarried and focused on raising her children, relying on God and her faith to see her young family through.

PAL's Gesmundo said yesterday that since the initial story on Becky was run in the INQUIRER, his office had been swamped with calls and e-mails from people who knew her.

One caller identified himself as Becky's classmate at the De La Salle University graduate school in the 1970s.

"[He] seemed to have had a big, big crush on her because he even remembered the title of her thesis," Gesmundo said with a laugh.

Becky remembers those days well.

"I took advantage of many first things. I was one of the first female MBA graduates of La Salle, and my classmates then were all generals," she said.

Becky retired from PAL in 1987. Fifteen years ago, she moved to New York to be the "babysitter" of her only grandchild, Alexandra Rebecca, now 15.

She also worked as a "playground monitor" at the Unis, where she taught the pupils to call her "Lola."

She retired five years ago, at 77. But she said she continued to be delighted by the recognition the school had given her: Her photograph is in its library.

Navigator; sudoku fanatic

Becky has just returned from a trip to Europe with a friend who is also a former PAL flight attendant.

The veteran traveler, who has done away with her cane, proudly recounted that she served as the "navigator" while her daughter drove them around.

"I've learned after all these years that when traveling, all you have to do is buy a map," she said.

She also reads up on a place before going there, "to understand and enjoy what I see."

Another of Becky's passions is Sudoku, the challenging math puzzle. She has taught her fellow "senior citizens" how to solve it, and has developed her own puzzles as well.

A member of the Opus Dei, Becky firmly believes that life should be spent sharing one's gifts and talents with others, because "there's a reason why you were created."

Her motto: Serve others and don't waste your time and talent. Becky is looking forward to turning 83 on Jan. 7.

In "Wise Women," she was quoted as saying: "Make use of all your faculties while you are going toward your golden years, because you want to be of service. To give of yourself, to love—this is why we are on earth."

The gospel according to the Apostle of Hope

From page A1

or fireworks. Instead, let it be a day of prayer," Sonia Roco said of her husband on Friday. She asked friends and sympathizers to quietly "remember how much he loved and served us with the gift of his life."

Great race

Roco once said Filipinos belonged to a "great race" but had been oppressed and exploited by their own leaders "since Gomburza"—a reference to the priests Gomez, Burgos and Zamora who were executed by the Philippines' Spanish colonizers.

Quoting the poet Balagtas, he said the talented were often put down without respect by the ruling power and spoke of the urgency of helping an oppressed nation rise from its knees: "*Bawat magagaling ay ibinabaon at inililibing nang walang kabaong. Hindi makaangat. Iyan po ang iwasan natin. Ang magaling tulungan, nang makatulong sa nakaluhod na bayan.*"

In another speech, Roco asked how Filipinos could reach for a star that seemed distant and elusive.

He himself provided the answer: "*Sa kaunting sipag, aral at dasal, tayong lahat magtatagumpay* (Through hard work, education and prayer, we will all succeed)."

In a fitting finale to his speech during the launch of his presidential candidacy in 2004, Roco claimed "victory for the Filipinos" and said: "I offer my life to my beloved Philippines!"

And upon his death, foes and friends heaped praise on him, calling him "the best President this country never had," "a patriot and freedom fighter" and "an intellectual but gentle giant."

HOPE

The video starts with footage of Roco's election campaign in 2004 interspersed with clips of his burial rites in his native Naga City, his speeches and portions of TV ads.

It ends with his call to the people to join him in carving out a new country devoted to the tenets of democracy, fair play, decency, dignity, honesty and honor in public service.

Familiar are the images of Roco dressed in his signature floral shirt and explaining his campaign platform of HOPE— Honest governance, Opportunity for all/special privileges for none, and People Empowerment (including free education, moral leadership and justice for all).

A clip has him talking of someone who asked about his chances of winning the presidential race, and his reply: "It's as if you ask if this country has hope. It's up to you. There is hope for the new Philippines."

Act of God

On the campaign trail, Roco once told the INQUIRER that he had fought for an honest government all his life.

"Only an act of God will make me quit the race," he said, unaware at the time that the cancer that had earlier afflicted him (and that was cured in 1996) would recur shortly after he announced his candidacy.

On the eve of his departure for Houston in April 2004 to seek treatment for back pain that was later traced to prostate cancer, Roco said: "There are two things to remember—I will not die on you and I will continue fighting. And if I die, I will continue fighting with your help. The Philippines needs a choice. We will be there."

He added for good measure: "Tell it to the wind, I'm not quitting."

When he returned two weeks before the May polls, he said he had come back to ensure "the health of the nation." He pointed out that his countrymen, and not the establishment and corrupt leaders, should judge him and his intentions.

A clip in the video has Roco saying: "What are we fighting for? Equal implementation of the law. There cannot be any respect for the law until we ensure that the process of justice is respected."

Saying "knowledge is wealth," he pushed for free education for the poor.

He pledged to "fight oppression, lies and corruption."

"We must never resort to illegal means even to pursue goals that are acceptable to society," he said.

Seeds of change

Bedridden at his home, dressed in a floral hospital gown, Roco told this reporter that he wanted to be remembered as "the one who sowed the seeds of change in this country."

"Now it's up to you and the younger generations to bear fruit," he said.

He made no mention of the reforms he had instituted or the laws he had authored.

When Roco passed away, his brother Facundo said "he wanted to be President already" even in their youth.

Facundo said Roco saw a better world from a distance "and wanted to take us along."

Just after Roco died at the St. Luke's Medical Center in Quezon City, his eldest son Robbie Pierre noticed the sudden downpour—and remarked: "The grass is greener the next day."

Dismissed judge, elfin pals . . .

From page A1

three friends were superstars among psychics and believers of the occult throughout the world.

The high court last April dismissed the 53-year-old Floro, a Malabon Regional Trial Court judge, after finding that he was suffering from a mental "disabling condition" that it said made it impossible for him to discharge his judicial functions.

Floro now claims that the news of his sacking—which came out on CNN, Time magazine and The New York Times, among more than a hundred international news agencies and publications—has given him and the three dwarfs "immortality."

Mind-boggling delay

In CNN's "Showbiz Tonight" show, co-host A.J. Hammer singled out the news story on Floro as the story of the day.

Although he joked that there was nothing wrong with consulting dwarfs from time to time, Hammer pointed to the three-year delay in the investigation of Floro as mind-boggling.

"Dwarfs, healing sessions, a three-year investigation? Now, that's ridiculous!" he said.

In NBC's "Countdown w/ Keith Olbermann" show, Floro was cited as "No. 2" in Countdown's "three top newsmakers of the day" last April 11.

Floro graduated with second honors from the Ateneo de Manila University law school and placed 12th in the 1983 bar examinations with a grade of 87.55 percent.

"From obscurity, my name ... and the three mystic dwarfs became immortal not only in this country, not solely in the international broadcasts (CNN, MSN-NBC) and in almost all print media worldwide, but first and foremost, in the indelible memory of world judicial history," he said in a letter to the court that he sent to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban last Friday.

Occult blogs

Floro said news of his dismissal also figured in forum discussions in more than 1,000 blogs all over the world and elicited 10,000 replies, with believers of the occult and those who claim to see spirits and dwarfs siding with him.

In the letter, to which he attached about 200 pages of international news stories about him, Floro "begged" the court to act on his partial motion for reconsideration. He asked that he be returned to the service and given the 83 months' worth of back wages that accumulated during the period of his preventive suspension before he was eventually dismissed.

The high court had rejected five such previous motions from Floro.

In a decision penned by Associate Justice Minita Chico-Nazario, the high court found Floro guilty of seven of the 13 administrative charges lodged against him by the Office of the Court Administrator (OCA).

During the three-year investigation of the case by the OCA, during which he was interviewed by doctors, psychologists and other medical experts, Floro admitted that he believed in "psychic visions" of the future because of his powers and mastery of "psychic phenomenon."

Healing sessions

He also confessed that he had made a covenant with his "dwarf friends," that he could write while in a trance and that he had been seen by several people in two places at the same time.

Questioned by court officials, Floro also admitted conducting healing sessions in his chambers during breaks.

"Psychic phenomena, even assuming such exist, have no place in a judiciary duty-bound to apply only positive law and, in its absence, equitable rules and principles in resolving controversies," the court said in its en banc decision.

The court also ordered Floro to pay the amount of P40,000 as a penalty but awarded him three years' worth of back salaries, allowances and other economic benefits.

'Psychosis'

However, the high court said that it was not within its authority to conclude that Floro was "insane" but said it agreed with the findings of the Supreme Court clinic that showed Floro to be suffering from "psychosis."

According to Floro, the international paranormal and legal discussions triggered by his case had made him "immortal."

"When you hit it big in the print media internationally, you are immortal," he said.

Taxpayers to foot bill . . .

From page A1

be footing the bill.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda said the price of the electricity sold in the wholesale electricity spot market (WESM) which would make a 52-centavo-per-kWh power rate reduction possible, was in effect being subsidized by the state.

Salceda explained this was because the primary seller in the WESM at this point was the state-owned power generator, the financially ailing and loss-making National Power Corp., which since the 1990s had been locked into onerous long-term supply contracts with independent power producers (IPPs).

But Salceda, an economic adviser to the President, was quick to point out that the policy to subsidize power costs through the WESM was noteworthy largely because "lower electricity prices offer a second best policy use of excess revenues" given the failure to pass the 2006 budget.

Subsidizing power rates through the WESM has allowed the government—whose revenues have been bolstered by increased collections from the expanded value-added tax over the past 10 months—to quickly provide benefits to the masses that consume less than 200 kilowatt hours of electricity a month.

Desirable, but ...

"It is desirable but the government must be forthright about the costs," he said.

Because of crippling power shortages in the early 1990s, the government was forced to commission independent power producers to generate power. Under the terms of the contracts, Napocor was obliged to buy a fixed percentage of the power that these IPPs produced.

However, Napocor is not able to sell all of the power that it buys from the IPPs and has been paying for it in the so-called stranded costs which are then passed on to consumers.

'Stranded costs'

As of 2003, Napocor's stranded costs amounted to P2.88 billion.

The government solution is to deregulate the generation sector and sell off Napocor and its plants. But until this is done, the government must set the maximum losses that the state corporation can bear.

According to Salceda, Napocor would be absorbing the 59 centavos differential between what the IPPs are charging for the power they sell to the state firm and what Napocor then sells to distributors, electric cooperatives and bulk power users at the WESM.

Market decides

But the congressman noted that another desirable side to coursing power subsidies through the WESM is that "at least markets and not the bureaucrats decide how much losses Napocor must bear which the national government eventually must service."

"It's an almost one-to-one correspondence. Napocor losses equal consumer welfare gains such as cheaper cost to industry and market efficiencies due to better resource allocation," he said.

But he warned that while the rate reductions offer immediate relief to households and industries, the government must decide at some point how much and for how long it was willing to subsidize the power rates at the WESM as this would eventually affect negatively the government's fiscal position.

"Let's not kid ourselves that it is a free ride," said Salceda in an interview.

"At a certain point, perhaps three years from now, these subsidies would displace a school building in Albay or dispossess an indigent of a health card," he said.

Makati court clears Honasan's pals of rebellion raps

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A MAKATI COURT FRIDAY cleared two close associates of fugitive ex-Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan of rebellion charges filed against them by the Department of Justice in connection with the failed July 2003 Oakwood mutiny.

Retired colonels Virgilio Briones and Romeo Lazo were released around 3:30 p.m. yesterday from the detention center of the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp) after Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 Judge Oscar Pimentel favored the DOJ's motion to discharge them from the case, citing lack of probable cause against them.

Briones and Lazo, both members of the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood Inc. (PGBI), had been under Isafp's custody in Camp Aguinaldo since they were arrested separately in Quezon City last June.

"The court resolves to grant the (DOJ) motion, it appearing no sufficient evidence to try the two accused for the crime for which they now stand charged. As a consequence, accused Briones and Lazo ... are now excluded from the [criminal] information and, consequently, the case against them is dismissed," Pimentel said in his order.

Briones and Lazo were charged in February together with Honasan and four others with allegedly supporting the renegade soldiers who stormed the Oakwood Premier apartment-hotel in Makati City on July 27, 2003. Some 31 junior officers are currently undergoing a separate trial in Pimentel's court for the same charges.

Pimentel issued the ruling after the DOJ filed a motion to exclude Briones and Lazo from the case due to lack of probable cause following a review of their indictment.

Complainant vs Comelec insists illegal acts were committed by poll officials

By Jerome Aning

"ILLEGAL ACTS were committed, that's why an investigation was ordered."

The main complainant in the voided P1.3-billion computerization contract between the Commission on Elections and the MegaPacific Consortium made the statement yesterday as he called on the poll agency's officials not to mislead the public regarding the Supreme Court's decision on the matter.

Augusto Lagman, president of the Information Technology Foundation of the Philippines (ITFP), disputed the recent claim by lawyer Federico Alday Jr. that majority of the Supreme Court justices did not find any basis to impute any criminal intent or liability on any official of the Comelec.

Alday is the lawyer for Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. and Commissioner Florentino Tuason Jr.

"They should stop misleading the public. The Supreme Court, in its en banc decision [which nullified the deal in 2004], ruled that illegal acts were committed by the Comelec in the award of the contract," Lagman told the INQUIRER by phone from New Zealand, where he is attending a conference.

Lagman said that even if only five of 13 Supreme Court justices ordered the Ombudsman to investigate the Comelec officials for possible criminal liability, nine of them definitely ruled that the poll body committed grave abuse of discretion in approving the computerization contract.

"The Comelec and its officials concerned must bear full responsibility for the failed bidding and award, and held accountable for the electoral mess wrought by their grave abuse of discretion in the performance of their functions," read the en banc decision written by then Associate Justice Artemio Panganiban.

Philippine laws and jurisprudence define grave abuse of discretion as "the capricious and whimsical exercise of judgment on the part of the public officer concerned which is equivalent to an excess or lack of jurisdiction.

"The abuse of discretion must be so patent and gross as to amount to an evasion of a positive duty or a virtual refusal to perform a duty enjoined by law, or to act at all in contemplation of the law as where the power is exercised in an arbitrary and despotic manner by reason of passion or hostility."

Panganiban's opinion was backed by four other justices—Antonio Carpio, Ma. Alicia Austria-Martinez, Conchita Carpio-Morales and Romeo Callejo Sr.

The en banc opinion ordered the Ombudsman to determine the criminal liability, if any, of the Comelec officials involved in the deal.

Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, in a separate opinion, also voted to nullify the deal but did not indicate whether the Comelec should be investigated.

She wrote that "the serious defects in the bidding process indicate a grave abuse of discretion" on the part of the Comelec.

Justice Angelina Sandoval-Gutierrez, in another concurring opinion, also did not say if the Comelec should be investigated, but averred: "It is grave abuse of discretion on the part of the Comelec to award a billion-peso contract to an entity whose existence and eligibility is highly questionable."

Ynares' opinion was concurred in by Justice Reynato Puno while Justice Leonardo Quisumbing agreed with the result of the voting, making a total of nine justices who found that the Comelec had committed grave abuse of authority.

Alday only cited the dissenting opinion of then Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., who said: "There is no suggestion that graft and corruption attended the bidding process, or that the contract price was excessive or unreasonable."

He said Davide's opinion should have been given much weight since he had been a Comelec chair himself.

Lagman said the ITFP, in its original complaint, did not even ask that the Comelec be investigated but only for the deal to be scrapped due to violations of government procurement rules.

"We should all obey the Supreme Court ruling. The Ombudsman was only obeying the Supreme Court's ruling," he said.

Abalos, Tuason and Commissioner Resurreccion Borra had questioned the Ombudsman's authority to investigate them.

Ombudsman: Tipsters must have right intent

By Norman Bordadora

OMBUDSMAN MERceditas Gutierrez said Friday whistle-blowers should have the best of intentions when they tip-off corruption and other wrongdoing in government.

The right reasons are important because it often happens that the whistle-blower is part of the very group whose corruption is being exposed," Gutierrez said in her speech during the launch of "Aha! A Citizens' Primer on Whistle-blowing."

The primer is a 70-page booklet containing substantive and procedural aspects in tipping off the authorities about irregularities in the government service.

"If he only got a raw deal from his own co-conspirators and had no reason higher than that, his credibility would be relentlessly attacked and he may just end up disowning his exposé," she said, of a whistle-blower who may have an ulterior motive.

The manual was put together by the Ombudsman and the Provincial of the Society of Jesus with support from the US Agency for International Development (USAID).

"It is the use of wrong reasons that I suspect is at the root of many failed whistle-blowing attempts," Gutierrez said.

"If you as a whistle-blower are saying something but your hidden personal agenda is saying something else, the environment will soon become very clouded and in the end, no one knows who is telling the truth or lies," she said.

Under such circumstances, Gutierrez said the public service sector is worse off "because so much valuable time and resources would have been spent for nothing."

"Why? Because investigators and whistle-blowers were never on the same wavelength," Gutierrez said.

"Especially when the investigators themselves have their own hidden agenda, they often fail to understand one another. And all they succeed in making plain is that no one can really be trusted," she said.

The manual was the result of research conducted on whistle-blowers that showed a "pessimistic mood" prevailing over the whistle-blowing experience in the Philippines.

Gutierrez said this concern was one of the reasons the manual was produced.

She said the manual was a "practical guide for whistle-blowing and tipping with deeper philosophical, moral and spiritual bases."

L. B. Victorino; 76

LIRIO "LILY" BAUTISTA VICTORINO, wife of Justice Raoul V. Victorino of the Judicial and Bar Council, died on Aug. 5 at the age of 76.

Victorino was president of the Abiertas House of Friendship and Radiance School in Quezon City. She had also served as president of the Unida Women's Organization, the Church Women United of the Philippines and the Asian Church Women's Conference. She had also been vice chair and treasurer of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines.

Her remains lie at the Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City, and will be transferred to the Bishop Moises F. Buzon Memorial Church at 634 Moriones St., Tondo, Manila, in the afternoon of Aug. 6.

Interment will be on Aug. 9 at the Manila North Cemetery after the 1 p.m. service at the Bishop Moises F. Buzon Memorial Church.

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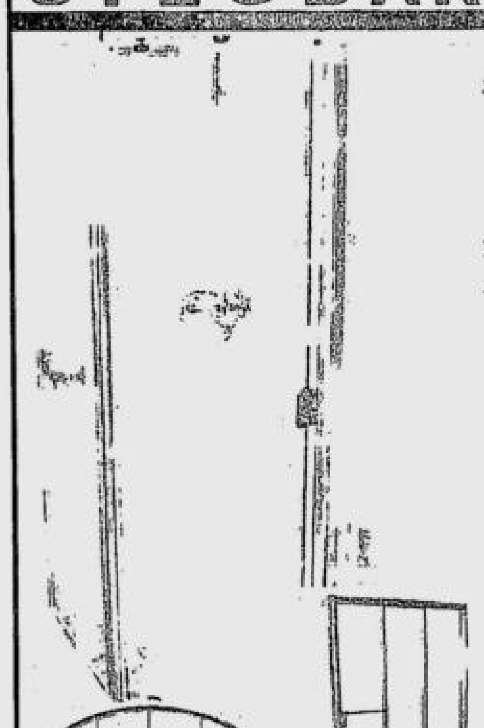
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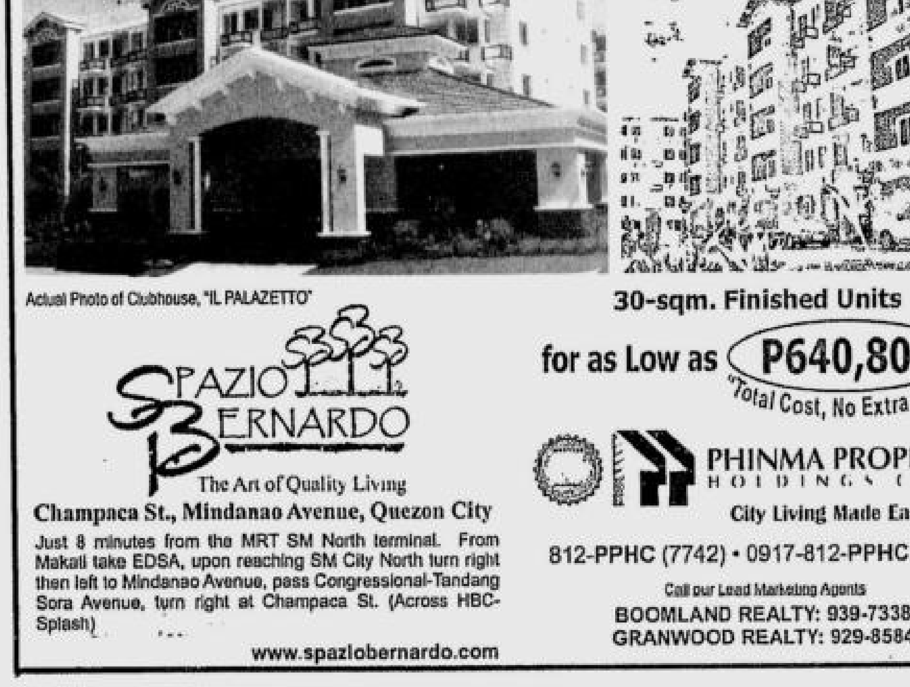
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Another banker named to education department

ANOTHER BANKER HAS BEEN appointed to a ranking position in the Department of Education (DepEd).

Malacañang designated last Friday Ted Sangil Jr. as the new undersecretary for finance and administration.

Sangil, an international banker, joins former Rep. Jesli Lapus, another prominent banker, who was appointed the new DepEd secretary recently.

Sangil replaced Juan Miguel Luz, himself a banker. The Palace gave Luz his walking papers last year after he refused to honor three postdated checks from Malacañang intended for Zambales Rep. Antonio Diaz. Luz had said issuing postdated checks by the government was illegal.

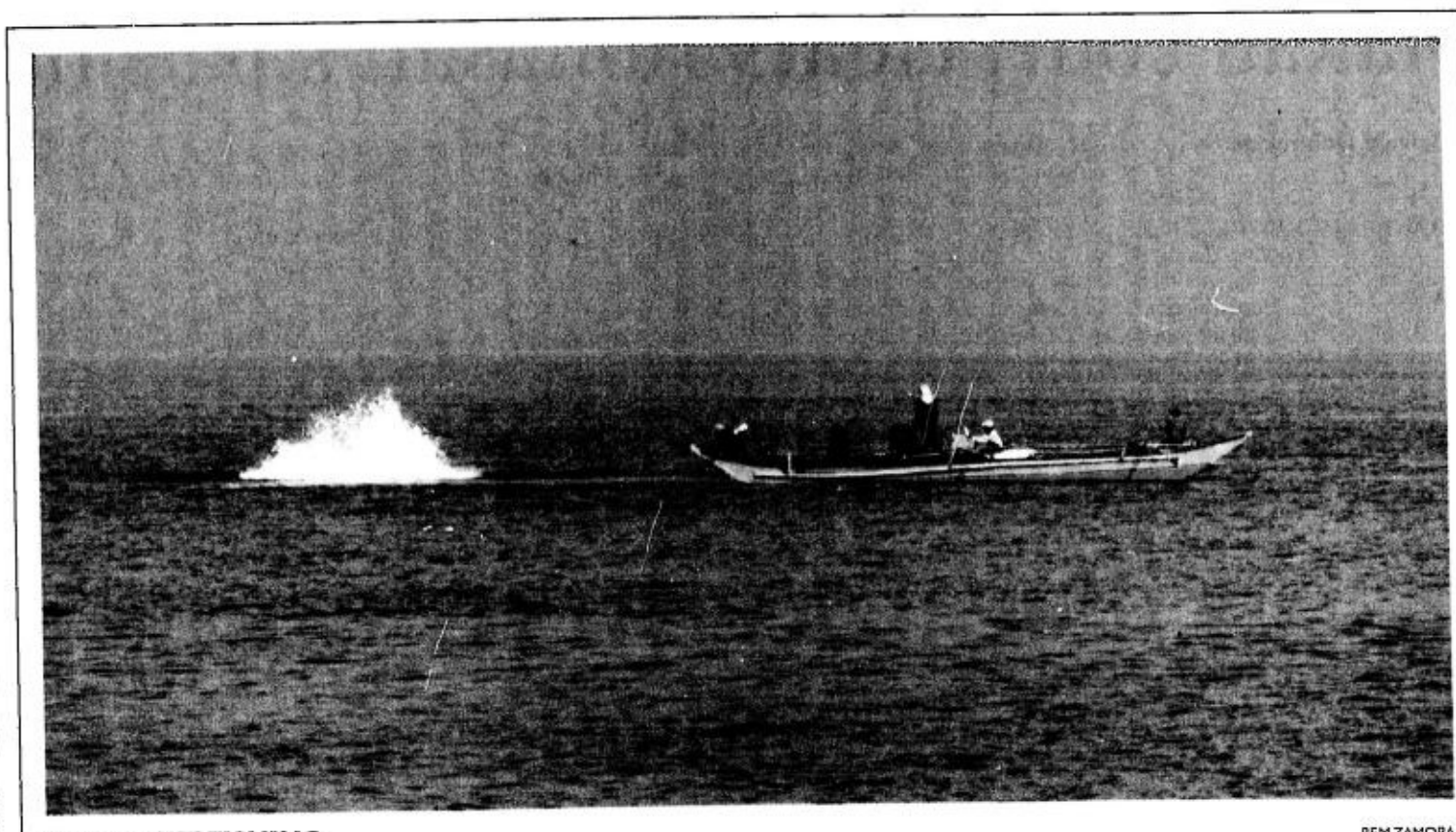
The postdated checks totaling P15 million purportedly for scholars sponsored by Diaz came from the President's social fund and were believed to be connected to efforts to kill the impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo last year.

In a press release, Sangil said his banking, management and planning experiences had made him "well-versed" in the field of finance. He believed his previous positions "will work to the advantage" of the department in strengthening and innovating further its financial system.

Before joining DepEd, Sangil was with Metrobank in Shanghai, China, and became the bank's Korea country manager. He was also regional head for the bank's European operations after setting up its branches in London, Madrid, Barcelona, Turin, Vienna, Rome, Messina and Milan.

He was also connected with the Land Bank of the Philippines for 20 years, mostly in overseas operations in Singapore and other Asian countries. Lapus was also a LandBank official.

Alcuin Papa



REM ZAMORA

EXPLOSIVE FISHING
Fishermen are caught in the act of using dynamite to catch fish on Manila Bay, behind the newly opened SM Mall of Asia on Saturday. The fishers just sped off when a Coast Guard patrol vessel arrived on the scene.

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Government to review hazard maps, plans for 'super regions'

BONGABONG, NUEVA ECIJA—The government is set to review its natural hazards map and disaster response program in light of planned new investments in the five "super regions" proposed by President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"We need to take a second look and improve on what we have," Glenn Rabonza, executive officer of the National Disaster Coordinating Council, said here on Friday.

Rabonza said disaster management was a key component of the new Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan that the President announced during her address to the nation last month.

Under the plan, the country's 16 regions will be collapsed into five super regions. These are the North Luzon agribusiness quadrangle, the Metro Luzon urban beltway, Central Philippines, Mindanao and the Cyber Corridor.

The planned public investments alone for new social and infrastructure projects in these five regions is estimated at P207.8 billion. Government also plans to tap private investors and multilateral donors for the big-ticket projects in the super regions.

Rabonza, the administrator of the Office of Civil Defense, said what the country has right now is a four-year-old multi-hazard map prepared and updated by the Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (Pagasa), the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs), and the Mines and Geosciences Bureau.

That map shows that 47 provinces across the country are vulnerable to landslides, ground rupture, volcanic eruptions, flash floods and tsunami.

Rabonza said the map would be revised when the Department of Environment and Natural Resources completes a geological hazards assessment in October. The study is being funded by a $4.3-million grant from the United Nations Development Program and the Australian Government Overseas Aid Program (AusAid).

He said the government has learned some lessons from the most recent disasters. The landslides that struck 12 Luzon provinces in 2004 "jolted" authorities, he said.

He said "good things" resulted from these tragic events. For one, the UNDP granted the government's request to send a team to assess the level of preparedness and response capabilities of city and town governments.

The UNDP sent a mission last May, returned for a review in July and tracked down the "good progress" of local governments with their disaster management plans.

Rabonza said the landslides also led to the creation of a four-point program of action by the NDCC, which included the upgrading of forecasting equipment. The United Nations paid for two new weather radars and Japan donated four similar units. The repair of three of five radars by Pagasa at a cost of P17 million brought to 11 the total number of forecasting equipment.

Phivolcs was allotted P1 billion to acquire "state-of-the-art monitoring facilities" of about eight active volcanoes.

He said the NDCC has sustained a hazards awareness campaign through regular drills while local officials are being trained as disaster managers.

"They [the officials] realize that responding to disaster events is their mandate and it is crucial to their political survival. Disasters are sensitive issues to local executives," he said. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

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Police seize P300-M worth of ingredients for making 'shabu'

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE FRIDAY SEIZED P300 million worth of chemicals used in the manufacture of methamphetamine hydrochloride, or the banned substance "shabu," in Bulacan province but were unable to catch any drug traffickers.

Antinarcotics agents raided a townhouse in Barangay Turo in Bocaue town and seized 100 kilos of ephedrine, a major component in making shabu, police said.

No suspects were arrested, they said.

Police estimated that the chemicals could be cooked into a huge quantity of shabu that could easily fetch up to P600 million in the market, based on a street value of P6,000 per gram.

The raid was the result of several weeks of surveillance, said Director Marcelo Ele, head of the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force.

An informant had told the police that Chinese or Taiwanese nationals had occupied the townhouse.

"The suspects... were confirmed henchmen of the Cheng Hsiang Ting Group, a transnational syndicate engaged in drug trafficking," Ele said. "The syndicate has a subgroup operating in the Philippines headed by Chuang Fen Ming, alias Jacky Chuan, wanted by Taiwanese for drug-related offenses."

Police said Chuan owned the mini-ketamine laboratory uncovered after a fire broke out inside a condominium in Malate, Manila, early last month.

Ele said an agent had told the authorities that Chuan had been planning to establish another shabu laboratory in Central Luzon.

The group had succeeded in smuggling in ephedrine, the main component of shabu, the police said, adding that the other chemicals were to have been sourced from a dormant laboratory in Parañaque City.

That laboratory was raided last month, leading to the arrest of several suspects and the seizure of hundreds of bottles of ingredients and equipment, police said.

"The collusion of the two drug syndicates was further confirmed by the findings of the CIDG (Criminal Investigation and Detection Group) that the seized chemical ingredients and laboratory equipment from Parañaque were about to be transported to Region 3," Ele said.

'I want to help you; I wish I could, but if I try I might die'

"I WANT TO HELP YOU. I WISH I could, but if I try I might die."

This was what controversial Filipino mountaineer Dale Abenojar reportedly told climber David Sharpe as the Briton lay dying on the slopes of the North Side of Mt. Everest in May.

Abenojar said he stayed with Sharpe for 15 minutes at an altitude of around 8,000 meters.

"At that time, I did not know it was David Sharpe. He was still breathing but there were bubbles on his nose and mouth. I knew he was already at the advanced stage of HAPE (high-altitude pulmonary edema)," Abenojar told reporters just before the screening of the documentary of his climb the other night at SM Megamall.

"I was thinking of dragging him down using a rope but I was already out of breath. I was thinking I might die. I wanted to help but I didn't know what to do," Abenojar said.

He said he tried to talk to Sharpe. "I told him 'I want to help you. I wish I could but if I try, I might die. I will try to look for help.'"

Abenojar recalled that he made his way down to Camp 3 and asked other expeditions to help him get Sharpe down. "But no one was responding. And night was already falling."

The story of Sharpe became controversial internationally when it was learned that close to 40 mountaineers, including double amputee Mark Inglis, did not stop to help him. Sharpe was said to have reached the summit but became disoriented on his way down. *Alcuin Papa*

Abenojar bares plan to scale Everest again sans oxygen

By Alcuin Papa

CONTROVERSIAL MOUNTAINEER Dale Abenojar plans to return to Mt. Everest to become the first Filipino to scale the world's highest peak without the aid of oxygen.

Abenojar revealed the plan to his audience during the screening of a documentary on his Everest climb Friday night at SM Megamall Cinema 1.

Talking to reporters before the screening, Abenojar said he was also planning to scale another major mountain in September.

Robin Mendoza, who handles press relations for Abenojar, said the mountaineer will attempt in September to climb Mt. Cho-Oyu (8,201 m or 26,906 ft), the sixth highest mountain in the world located in the Himalayan range 25 miles west of Everest, without oxygen.

Mendoza said the Cho-Oyu climb would be training for Abenojar's Everest second attempt on the more difficult North Side possibly next year during the April to May climbing season. "He (Abenojar) already knows the North Col," he said.

After the showing of his documentary "Child in Everest," Abenojar said he would be returning to Everest "if there are sponsors."

"I miss the difficulties I experienced there, the cold, the feeling of accomplishment," he said.

Climbing without the aid of oxygen is considered extremely dangerous since the body is only taking in from one-third to one-half the amount of oxygen it takes in at sea level. This could lead to acute mountain sickness (AMS) and high-altitude pulmonary edema (HAPE) where the lungs fill up with fluid literally drowning the victim. AMS and HAPE would most likely lead to death. Only mountaineers with experience climbing 8,000-m peaks are advised to attempt any mountain without oxygen.

If he is successful, Abenojar would join an elite club of mountaineering legends who scaled Everest without oxygen—Reinhold Messner and Hans Engl. Sir Edmund Hillary, the first man to scale Everest, also accomplished the feat without oxygen, but he was extremely acclimatized to the thin air.

"Child in Everest" showed clips of Abenojar's journey from Manila to Katmandu in Tibet to the base of Everest's North Side, considered the more difficult of the climb routes to its peak.

Most of the clips featured Abenojar inside his tent talking to the camera, trekking up the North Col and returning to Manila. Compared to the other Filipino expeditions on the South side sponsored by TV networks GMA-7 and ABS-CBN, there was no footage of Abenojar actually standing on the summit.

The documentary featured pictures of Abenojar purportedly on the summit and near the summit and a certification from the Chinese Mountaineering Association.

Mendoza said Abenojar's video camera froze when the mountaineer reached the summit but the camera started working again 15 meters from the summit during Abenoajr's descent.

Abenojar kicked up a controversy when he claimed to have reached the summit on May 15, three days before two other Filipino teams climbing on the South side. Members of the First Philippine Mt. Everest Expedition (FPMEE) said it was unlikely Abenojar made it to the top.

But the other night, Abenojar said the documentary, which he said he had no hand in producing, was meant only for his family, friends and supporters and was not meant to stake his claim as the first Filipino on Everest.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, August 6, 2006
Transfiguration of the Lord

1st Reading: Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14

One like a son of Man

Daniel said, "I looked and saw the following: Some thrones were set in place and One of Great Age took his seat. His robe was white as snow, his hair white as washed wool. His throne was flames of fire with wheels of blazing fire. A river of fire sprang forth and flowed before him. Thousands upon thousands served him and a countless multitude stood before him.

"Those in the tribunal took their seats and opened the book.

"I continued watching the nocturnal vision:

"One like a son of man came on the clouds of heaven. He faced the One of Great Age and was brought into his presence.

"Dominion, honor and kingship were given him, and all the peoples and nations of every language served him. His dominion is eternal and shall never pass away; his kingdom will never be destroyed."

2nd Reading: 2 Peter 1:16-19

Voice from heaven

Indeed, what we taught you about the power and the return of Christ Jesus our Lord was not drawn from myths or formulated theories. We ourselves were eyewitnesses of his majesty, when he received glory and honor from God the Father, when from the magnificent Glory this most extraordinary word came upon him: "This is my beloved Son, this is my Chosen One." We ourselves heard this voice from heaven when we were with him on the holy mountain.

Therefore, we believe most firmly in the message of the prophets which you should consider rightly as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the break of day, when the Morning Star shines in your hearts.

Gospel: Mark 9:2-10

The beloved Son

Jesus took Peter, John and James and led them up a high mountain. There his appearance was changed before their eyes. Even his clothes shone, becoming as white as no bleach of this world could make them. Elijah and Moses appeared to them; the two were talking with Jesus.

Then Peter spoke and said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here; let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." For he did not know what to say; they were overcome with awe. But a cloud formed, covering them in a shadow, and from the cloud came this word, "This is my Son, the Beloved; listen to him." And suddenly, as they looked around, they no longer saw anyone except Jesus with them.

As they came down the mountain, he ordered them to tell no one what they had seen, until the Son of Man be risen from the dead. So they kept this to themselves, although they discussed with one another what 'to rise from the dead' could mean.

Commentary

The vision of Daniel is of the son of man coming on the clouds of heaven to receive glory and honor, kingship and dominion over the heavens and earth. This son of man comes before the Ancient One, God in glory. This is the power and awesomeness of God. This is Jesus, the beloved Son of God, upon whom God's grace rests; the prophet, the Crucified and Risen One, the Lord. We must never lose sight of who Jesus is—like a light in the dark, until the dawn comes and the morning star rises in our hearts. We know we must face rejection, the cross and death, but we also will face God in glory. We are to listen only to the Word of God, not what is around us or the fear inside us.

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OPINION

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A nation without slums

THIS YEAR'S MAGSAYSAY AWARD FOR COMMUNITY leadership is shared by an organization dedicated to creating "a nation without slums" and by the man who started it and continues to sustain it. Antonio Meloto and the Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation have helped house thousands of poor Filipinos; even more remarkably, they have done so in a way that is transparent, participative, eminently replicable. The Gawad Kalinga way is people power on a neighborhood scale.

EDITORIAL

Like the hero in a fable, the Gawad Kalinga story too has humble beginnings: After Meloto joined the Couples for Christ Catholic renewal movement full time, he worked with the residents of a squatter relocation site in Bagong Silang. Immersion in their lives brought home a sobering truth. In his words: "A slum environment develops slum behavior." But it also deepened his faith in the fundamental goodness of human beings, which he encountered again and again in Bagong Silang. It inspired him to add action to prayer. "We should do something."

That something turned out to be houses. With the indispensable help of volunteers from Couples for Christ and residents in the area, the first Gawad Kalinga village was built, brick by brick, in Bagong Silang.

In the decade since, over 800 Gawad Kalinga villages have been built, providing decent, remarkably clean (and brightly painted) housing for over a hundred thousand of the neediest Filipinos. The pace of construction has picked up in the last couple of years, after Gawad Kalinga committed itself to building 7,000 villages in seven years.

Whether that ambitious goal is met or not, Gawad Kalinga's manner of approach—its way of proceeding, in St. Ignatius of Loyola's regnant phrase—is itself already a boon.

In particular, we point to three distinctive features of the Gawad Kalinga way.

First, the standard unit of organization is not a house, but a neighborhood. Each village consists not only of tidy houses but also, in the words of the Magsaysay press officer, "flowers and plants and pleasant walkways, plus a school, a livelihood center and a multipurpose hall." Add "a self-governing neighborhood association," and the result is hosts of "stable and vibrant communities."

Second, the standard unit of participation is not a lone volunteer, but benefactor and beneficiary working together. The Gawad Kalinga way is founded on the idea that no one is too poor to bring something to the table; that, in fact, only the residents of a village can turn a cluster of houses into a community. While residents do not pay for their houses, they help build them; they volunteer for community work (for example, in livelihood projects); they run their own corner of the world.

Third, the standard unit of currency is not money, but inspiration. "As word of Gawad Kalinga's hopeful project circulated at home and abroad, it tapped into a reservoir of longing," the Magsaysay foundation noted. Many Filipinos "flocked to the movement, convinced by Meloto that their money and efforts could really make a difference."

Gawad Kalinga villages are built on the back of countless donors inspired to donate money or land or time. They are constructed by thousands of volunteers—from Couples for Christ chapters, Filipino communities abroad, schools and companies in the Philippines, and the ranks of the country's many professionals. Some are created through the help of friends in other countries, such as the Norway village and the Swiss village. About a hundred villages are sponsored by corporations—big business learning the lesson that small, truly, is beautiful.

The Magsaysay Award's citation for Gawad Kalinga honors both the foundation "and its family of donors, volunteers and beneficiaries"—there we have it: an acknowledgement, in black and white, of the Gawad Kalinga way—for "harnessing the faith and generosity of Filipinos the world over to confront poverty in their homeland and to provide every Filipino the dignity of a decent home and neighborhood."

And Meloto, who started it all? His citation recognizes his gift for "inspiring Filipinos to believe with pride that theirs can be a nation without slums."

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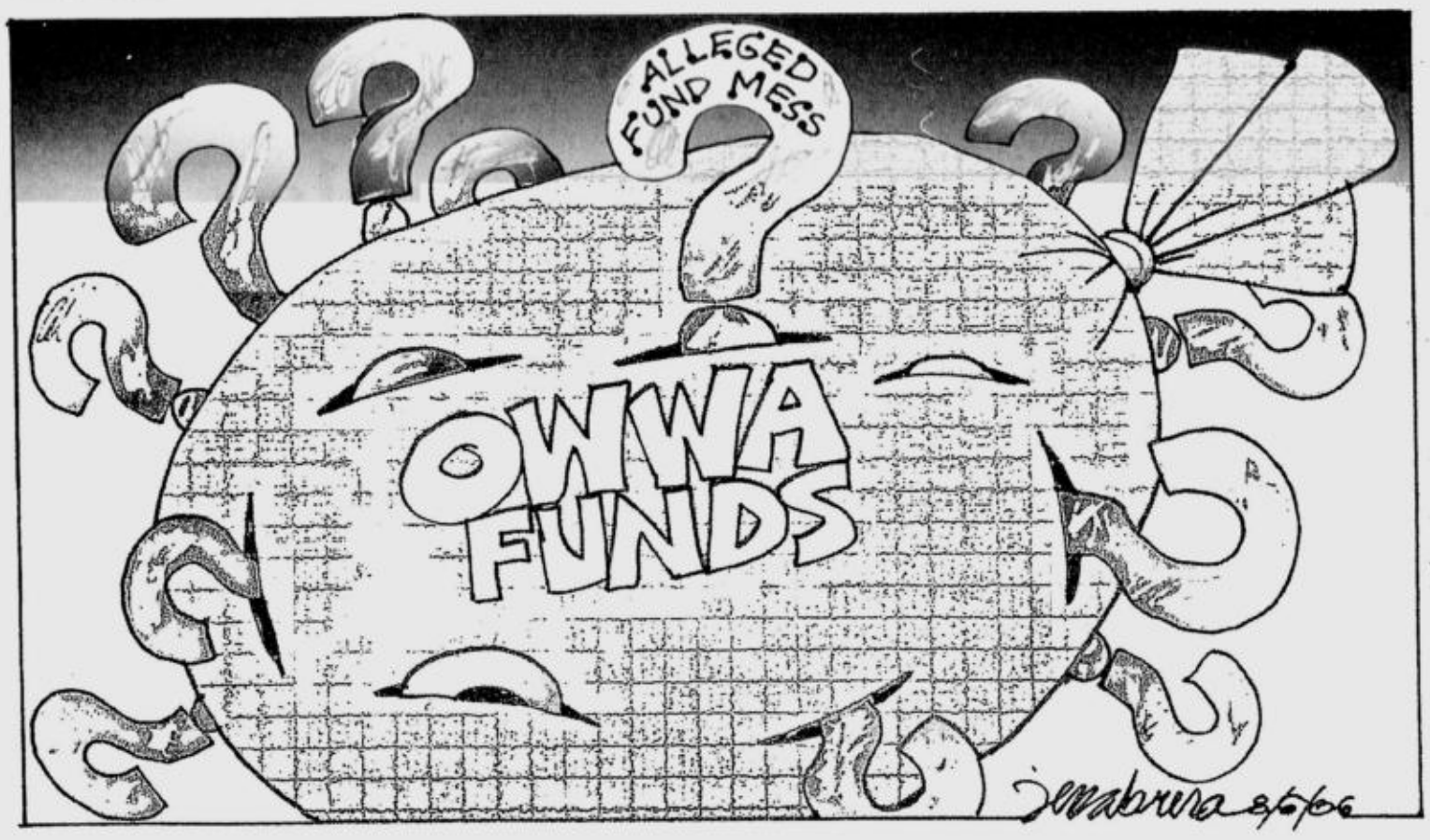

The right to know

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

UNLIKE THE POLLYANAS AMONG OUR PEOPLE who are easily beguiled by the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, especially when alerted by the clink of coins, I belong to the sensible majority that does not believe in her fairy tales.

Her recent Sona is a good example of how she has once again attempted to imitate Hans Christian Andersen, to no one's credence or amusement. She did not convince us—except the claque that obediently applauded her on cue in that fashion show in Congress—with her improbable promises that we shall, under her leadership, live happily ever after.

She would have been believable if she had instead said that we would "live happily ever after **her**." (Sorry for getting ahead of this article, but I couldn't resist saying that.)

Another evidence of her incredibility is the story of former Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante, who has been arrested in the United States reportedly for violation of its visa regulations. Thousands of aliens are in that country even without visas but have not been charged for that minor offense. This must not be the real and still unrevealed reason for Bolante's detention.

Bail for his release was fixed at $100,000, but he has so far not been set free despite his abundant financial resources and the generosity of friends known and suspected who might have come forward to assist him. The amount, while substantial, could have been easily raised but he is still in legal custody. Significantly, its size alone suggests that he has been apprehended not for his expired visa but for some serious crime that would justify the excessive bail. In our own currency, it would cost more than P5 million.

The Arroyo administration, assuming a posture of propriety and non-intervention in the internal affairs of another country, has not taken any special effort to assist Bolante, limiting itself to the usual assistance given to any Filipino in a foreign country. This is rather curious, considering that he is a former undersecretary in Ms Arroyo's Cabinet besides being a close friend and business associate of her husband.

Bolante was under investigation by the Senate for his disposition of the P728 million fertilizer fund that was allegedly used to buy votes for Ms Arroyo in 2004. For various excuses, he evaded appearance at the probe until it was discovered that he had secretly fled to the United States. His arrest was reported here by the foreign media, not by the Arroyo administration, strangely enough, although it had been informed about it one week earlier.

These questionable circumstances have fed the conjecture that the administration orchestrated the escape of Bolante to prevent him from revealing damaging information about the misuse of the farmers' fund. The government is less than eager to bring him back, preferring to keep him out of our jurisdiction and immune from the warrant of arrest issued against him by the Senate.

The latest news is that he is applying for asylum in the United States on the ground that he is being targeted for assassination by the NPA. This has been ridiculed by the communists, who do not consider him bothersome enough. Many people believe that assassination would give undeserved political importance to this anonymous underling whose extermination would be, in their view, justifiable homicide. Assuming the truth of the report, former Solicitor General Frank Chavez says ruefully that this will keep Bolante out of the Senate's reach, to the particular advantage and relish of the Arroyo camp. Asylum proceedings will take years to resolve, not to mention the judicial appeals to be surely taken from the administrative decision. Remember the case of Rodolfo Pacificador?

Bolante may enjoy his temporary haven in the United States while his petition is being debated and may even be granted permanent asylum there with his ominous secrets safely silenced.

As things now stand, the suspicious disinterest of the administration in bringing Bolante back and his practical immunity from the processes of the Philippine government will prevent further examination of how the P728 million fertilizer fund entrusted to him disappeared. That will remain an unresolved question that Ms Arroyo will eventually dismiss as a dead issue like the buried-alive Garci tapes.

An effective but crafty political tactic of the Arroyo administration is concealment, the clever obstruction of efforts to ferret out irregularities in government and expose wrongdoings committed by public servants, including impeachable officials led by the President of the Philippines. Of recent memory are PP 1017 and EO 464, struck down by the impatient Supreme Court as unconstitutional attempts of President Arroyo to thwart legislative investigations of her misrule.

The Watergate scandal denounced by the vigilant American press during the '70s led to the downfall of a President of the United States. But this may be one instructive experience our imitative people will not follow out of a sense of caution or, to put it bluntly, cowardice. We ape many of the bad things in that model country but are not inspired by some of its good examples, like the investigation and removal of the highest official in the land. We simply don't have the guts to be that indignant.

'Change na, now na'

MOMENTS

Fr. Jerry M. Orbos, SVD

THERE IS A STORY ABOUT A JOBLESS MAN who finally got a job in a circus, playing the part of a gorilla. Every day he delighted the crowd with his twisting and turning. One day, he slipped and fell into the lion's cage and he began to scream "Help! Get me out of here!" The lion came up to him and said: "Be quiet, you fool, or we'll both lose our job."

* * *

The disciples needed the transfiguration moment with the Lord to strengthen their faith. Up to the transfiguration, their following Jesus was just a job. After their "peak experience" with Jesus, wherein they witnessed the power of the divine (Mk. 9, 2-10), they became more committed and more zealous. We all need transfiguration moments to deepen our resolve to follow the Lord. But we must be open and sensitive to the stirrings of the divine in our day-to-day lives. Have you had a transfiguration moment lately?

* * *

When one gets sick, one is confronted with one's mortality. Sickness reminds us that life is not forever. It makes us remember our dependence on God. It should also lead us to reflect on the quality of life we are living. The inevitable prospect of meeting God, sooner or later, should make us change for the better, and should lead us to realize the futility of pursuing and holding on to fleeting worldly riches, fame and power.

* * *

When tragedy strikes—the loss of a loved one, a break-up, an accident, loss of a job, etc.—God is speaking clearly and loudly to us. Let us not take such moments lightly. Let us learn our lessons well. Come to think of it, we don't need to wait for big tragic moments to happen in our lives before we truly start listening to God in earnest. What amazes me is that some people, with all the loud speakers from heaven turned full volume on them, still go on with their old ways, as if nothing ever happened, as if they never heard.

* * *

Going back to our story above, many of us join the circus because of our need for a job. Worse, we end up like gorillas or lions because of our job. Some people give up beauty and gentleness of heart in their pursuit of worldly riches and power. Sad. What for? Is it worth it all? It would be good for all of us to ask this question today: As I get older and nearer to eternity, am I a better person? Am I living a life pleasing to the Father?

* * *

At every moment of our lives, we make the choice whether to become better or bitter, to become selfish or giving, to become angry or forgiving. In other words, we can choose heaven or hell now in the life we are living and in eternity that is waiting. As someone put it beautifully: "Why is it that people continue to hold on to worldly pleasures they cannot keep, and ignore eternity which they cannot escape?"

* * *

"This is my beloved Son. Listen to Him." The order comes from no less than God the Father! We must continue to listen to the Lord Jesus Christ as we go through the ups and downs of life. As a nation, we must listen to God, not to the circus that entertains us and, definitely, not to the gorillas and lions that pretend to lead us. If only the world listened to Jesus' message of service, sacrifice, forgiveness and love! Change *na*. Now *na*!

* * *

Last Friday was the Feast of St. John Vianney, patron saint of priests. Allow me to share with you a story of a priest, a beggar and a pope. One day, a priest saw a beggar at the door of his church in Rome, and recognized that the beggar was his former classmate who had left the priesthood. Concerned about him, the priest told the story of his beggar-classmate to Pope John Paul II. A few days later, an invitation came from the Vatican for them to have a meal with the Pope. At the end of the meal, the Pope had a private talk with the beggar-priest. What happened?

* * *

According to the beggar-priest, the Holy Father asked him to hear his confession. When he protested that he was no longer a priest, the Holy Father looked at him with compassion and said: "Once a priest, always a priest." Close to tears, the beggar-priest asked that he be restored to his priestly faculties. After he heard the Pope's confession, he was appointed by the Pope to be the curate of the church where he had been begging, with a special responsibility to attend to the beggars seeking alms at the church door.

* * *

Every once in a while, we meet people who transfigure us, and leave a permanent mark on us. They leave not only footprints but also "heart prints" in our lives. Let us make sure that we do not leave behind trash as we journey on in life. May this world become a better world because we passed by. I do hope that all of us will leave this world without much rancor or regret, because in our hearts we can say "I have done, I have given my very best!"

* * *

"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." (2 Timothy 4:7) See the Word through everyday stories and reflections; text ON<space>MOMENTS and send to 2948 for Globe/Sun or 3940 for Smart. God bless you. Mama Mary loves you!

* * *

A moment with the Lord:
Lord, help us to change na, now na. Amen.

Thank you, Amaya and Earl

REVEILLE

Ramon J. Farolan

ONE OF THE BEST KEPT SECRETS OF THE strange and puzzling world of Philippine sports was the recent victory of Filipino archers Amaya Paz and Earl Yap in the 2nd Asian Archery Grand Prix held in Kuala Lumpur last July 23-27. One would think that their impressive performance would merit immediate attention and congratulations from our sports officials. No such luck! Their accomplishments were not even the subject of press releases for the benefit of our people.

Paz, who gave the Philippines two gold medals in the last Southeast Asian Games (SEAG)—the individual women's compound competition and the women's team contest—repeated her SEAG performance in Kuala Lumpur, winning individual gold and another in team competition. This time she added another gold for the 30-meter distance event and three silvers for the 50-, 60- and 70-meter events.

Yap won the men's individual gold plus two other golds in the 70- and 90-meter events, including a bronze for the 50-meter competition.

Paz had to pay her way to Kuala Lumpur since the rules of the National Archery Association of the Philippines (NAAP) require an athlete to compete in a national qualifying round to be eligible for membership in the national contingent. Paz suffered a dislocated right elbow and was not able to join the competition for the qualifying round. Under the watchful supervision of orthopedic surgeon Dr. Jose Aliling, acupuncturist Dr. Butch Ong and physical therapist Leomil Adriano, she recovered before the Kuala Lumpur meet, but her appeal for inclusion in the team was turned down because of the NAAP rules. However, she was allowed to compete as a member of the team provided she paid her own way to Kuala Lumpur. Using her SEA Games incentives—P125,000 for the two gold medals—and with help from Quezon City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista, Paz left for Kuala Lumpur and once again gave glory and honor to her country through her sterling performances.

Thank you, Amaya Paz and Earl Yap!

* * *

"Amazing Grace"

My cousin Grace Balmaceda is finally home. For most of her life, she lived in New York raising two bright and gifted children, Mickey and Mary whom she sent to the best schools. Mickey attended McGill University in Montreal, Canada where he was the president of his class in that French-speaking university. Mary took up a master's program at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., where she graduated valedictorian of her class.

A true New Yorker, regardless of the winter cold or summer heat, Grace would be up at five, in church at six and at work by eight. She loved the changing seasons and told me once that if ever there was one reason why she would think twice about coming back to the Philippines when she retired, it was because she would miss the thrill of seeing the first bud breaking out in springtime, the breathtaking changes in the color of leaves in autumn, and the flurry of snow in winter. She blended with the brisk pace of a city that never sleeps, driving deftly through the maze of New York traffic, and weaving in and out of Manhattan, a place she knew like the palm of her hand.

The United Nations was her second home. Having worked in the UN for over 30 years, Grace was a familiar face to all—from the basement security guards to the diplomats that she worked with in the UN General Assembly. With Grace as a tour guide, friends and relatives who visited New York were given a complete tour of the United Nations building with its international treasure trove of the cultures of member nations. Within its foyers, each country displayed its precious art collections, paintings and sculptures. Penny and I got the VIP treatment when we visited the UN many years ago, ending the day with a thoughtful personal gift from Grace.

When Grace retired from the UN, she worked in the Embassy of Chile where she wrote, edited and translated from Spanish to English literary materials and publications of the government of Chile. Her work earned her the highest esteem of the embassy employees and the Chilean ambassador himself who depended on Grace to translate his speeches and articles. Last Monday, during the funeral Mass for Grace in New York, the ambassador from Chile arrived to join the services. In his farewell talk after the Mass, he paid Grace the highest compliment when he called her "Amazing Grace."

Taught by experience, Grace developed an inner strength that was not easy to destroy. Her totally positive outlook, her forgiving and compassionate nature, her absolute surrender to the will of God, made her go through life with the least emotional hang-ups. She could face trials and challenges and willingly helped those who could not cope with theirs. She gave without measure; ruefully comparing herself to the poor widow in the Bible who gladly dropped her last two copper coins in the offering box although she was in great need herself.

Grace did not only leave behind a bereaved family. She also left an institution that she established to keep the memory of her father alive. Grace founded the Cornelio Balmaceda Foundation. Its statement of purpose was written by Grace herself: "To bring the Balmaceda family together through activities that emulate and celebrate the life and values of Cornelio and Monica Balmaceda."

(Author's note: Cornelio Balmaceda, a secretary of commerce under President Diosdado Macapagal, was responsible for the establishment of the Asian Development Bank in the Philippines. His wife Monica was an elder sister of my mother.)

Mere anarchy

REBEL WITHOUT A CLUE

Patricia Evangelista

THINGS FALL APART. THE CENTER CANNOT HOLD. IT IS A country where a 21-year-old boy can be killed at six in the morning while riding on the back of a bus. It is a country where a parent can be shot while driving his 7-year-old child to school. Journalists are picked off one by one. Picketers are dispersed forcibly. Students routinely disappear. Activists are harassed. Homes are burned to the ground. People are afraid.

It is not a country in the grip of martial law. It is not a country fighting a civil war. It is the Republic of the Philippines, bastion of press freedom, home of the brave, the wise and the devout. The economy is on the upswing and growth outlooks are positive. Plans for airports have taken flight, and if government statements are to be believed, 4.5 million new jobs have already been generated. It is the grand beginning of a brilliant, bountiful new tomorrow. But it's not, and week by bloody week, I'm more convinced it won't be.

I heard about the abduction of UP students Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan late this July—nearly a month after they were picked up in Hagonoy, Bulacan. The two women are members of the activist national democratic organization League of Filipino Students, a group committed to "fight the offensives of imperialism, the reactionary government and other counter-revolutionary elements." At the time of their abduction, Karen and Sherlyn were volunteering with a peasant organization.

In a sworn statement, a 14-year-old witness said, "Four armed men passed us holding Karen Empeño and Sherlyn Cadapan. Ate Sherlyn was screaming and begging for help while they were being brought out of the alley." Her screaming caught the attention of 57-year-old farmer Manuel Merino, who ran out of his house to assist the women.

"When the armed men caught sight of him," said the witness, "they rammed a rifle at his throat that caused him to fall to his knees. The armed men brought him along and put him in the jeep."

In the Court of Appeals, in the petition for habeas corpus, the parents of Sherlyn and Karen named as respondents Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, Lt. Col. Rogelio Boac, a certain Lieutenant Samson and Arnel Enriquez. Only Boac appeared at the hearing. When asked whether the absence of the other respondents was a manifestation of the military's indifference to the case, the lawyer replied it was not—Palparan just had to attend an anniversary celebration.

At the hearing, the young witness' father, who had signed the initial joint statement with his son, was the first to go up the witness stand. When asked, the elderly man, who at the time of the abduction had been bound and blindfolded and had nearly drowned, denied that the signature was his.

It was the boy, clear-eyed and serious-faced, who claimed the signatures as his and his father's, as he explained point-by-point the circumstances of the case. He said later that the sight of the grinning Lieutenant Colonel Boac at first made him hesitate to testify.

A third witness testified that he woke up to the sight of a much-thinner Manuel Merino accompanied by armed men demanding for the gun that Karen and Sherlyn had supposedly left with him. The witness was taken to what was apparently a military detachment, then interrogated, threatened, and released after he promised to cooperate. He did not.

"If I don't speak at court, there will be no one in Bulacan who will." At the hearing, he refused to look at Boac who, observers claimed, showed incredible "maturity" by sticking out his tongue at the witness.

In letters to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz and Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, UP president Emerlinda Roman appealed for aid in locating the two young women. There has yet been no response to the letters sent a full month ago, and neither of the two administration officials is available for comment.

There have been some 709 extrajudicial executions during the Arroyo presidency. Task Force Usig, which the administration formed to investigate the killings, claimed that investigating the disappearance of the two UP students is a task that does not fall under its mandate. The task force's mandate is limited to political crimes against media personalities, party-list members and government officials. Sherlyn and Karen do not fall under any of the three categories and are, therefore, not to be given special attention. The task force's Captain Libay said his group would be overburdened if it investigated all politically motivated cases.

The case, he said, should be investigated by the local police which has jurisdiction over it. In a phone interview, PO3 Ponciano de la Cruz of the Hagonoy police claimed that his unit's dogged efforts in the course of a month have uncovered the startling fact that, indeed, two women and a man have been abducted.

However, he said the investigation is still going on—and the Hagonoy police are now sending queries to the UP units in Diliman and Los Baños. "So we'll know if they are really UP students."

Reports claim that Karen was blindfolded with the shirt she was forced to remove. Sherlyn was pregnant at the time of the abduction, and was due to be married soon.

At the crux of it all, their parents are still hopeful. Their daughters, possibly tortured, possibly hurt, must still be alive. Tomorrow, the Court of Appeals will meet again.

I have never met Karen or Sherlyn. Maybe we walked across the same hallway, or ate in the same cafeteria, or lined up at the same stall in the Faculty Center bathroom. I wouldn't have recognized them, and on the off-chance they recognized me, it would probably have been because one of their colleagues had a dart board with my face at its center.

I am used to thinking of people like Karen and Sherlyn as concepts, the street activists who are my natural negatives. To me, they are one of those red-shirted groups handing out photocopied manifestos in the lobbies of colleges, calling everyone to join them in removing the fascist government. They are the black to my white, the Dark Side to my Force, and though I claim tolerance and relativism, it is only now that I can see them as ordinary people with extraordinary courage.

I may not believe in their ideology. I may not stand for all that they do. If once again they roam the same hallways, queue for the same bathroom stall and eat in the same cafeteria, maybe, I won't recognize them, and they won't recognize me. But that doesn't matter. What should matter is that they're there, and that they can.

* * *

For comments, e-mail the author at pat.evangelista@gmail.com. Inspiration from "Slouching Towards Bethlehem" by Joan Didion.

Life is a 'jueteng' game

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

ONE LEAVES THE THEATER AFTER A SCREENing of "Kubrador" finally understanding why the illegal numbers game "*jueteng*" may never be eradicated, at least during our lifetime.

The *kubrador* in the movie's title is a bet collector named Amy (Gina Pareño) who lives in a slum community and does her daily rounds visiting with her regular bettors and convincing them to try their luck—just once more—for as little as P10.

In the three days that is the movie's timeline, Amy fills her days navigating the narrow alleys of the urban poor community where she lives, touching base with longtime friends, keeping herself updated on their lives, wrangling with her family members, especially her daughter who's married to a ne'er-do-well, and haunted by memories and images of a dead son, a soldier who died in the battlefield.

At the same time, the audience is given a tour of the jueteng sub-culture, one which thrives on the desperation of the poor, but also operates through a complex structure of social and personal ties, where trust is enforced by social strictures. Amy is the embodiment of this trust. Her "*suki*" trust her to note down their favored numbers and transmit their bets to the collector. Her collector trusts that she hasn't absconded with some or all of her collections. And should a two-number combination end up as the winning draw, everyone trusts that a *kubrador* like Amy will give the prize money to the rightful winner.

So trusted is Amy that on the side she also helps out the parish priest collect alms for the dead. The priest's letter of appeal, the death certificate and the photo of the departed matter little. The donors trust Amy and know the proceeds will go to the bereaved family. And it never enters Amy's mind to dip into her collections.

* * *

IN FACT, toward the film's close, when it turns out that due to her husband's absentmindedness Amy has failed to transmit a winning bet, she sets out despite the lateness of the hour to borrow the prize money, which she must now assume as her personal obligation.

Which may explain why jueteng persists despite the pronouncements of high officials and the denunciations of prelates. How could her neighbors ever think of someone like Amy as a criminal?

In her way, Amy holds her community together. From her person emanates a web of social relationships that preserves the social order: picking up news from one neighbor, relaying it to the next one she encounters; commiserating with the father of a promising student who was run over a few days after his graduation, she turns her attention to the preparations for the wake; arrested by police while in the line of duty, she intercedes for a less wily collector and then picks up the bets of cops in the station.

But Amy's life and those of her neighbors are ultimately ruled by uncertainty. When your fate is in the hands of local authorities, landowners, police and the rich and powerful—planning your life is not only senseless and futile, but even foolish. Better to trust in the vagaries of a numbers game, and in the people who profit from it, for at least your lucky day may come and offer you temporary relief from your daily despair.

* * *

"KUBRADOR" is thus a reflection of what it means to be poor and powerless in the mean streets of the city.

It means living with chances and figuring out the odds for survival on any given day. It means reading the "signs" not for the meaning of life, but for clues to the winning combination. It means searching for happiness wherever one may find it, in one's clever grandchild, as Amy does; or even in a TV game show, as her husband does.

At the movie's opening, another *kubrador* is shown walking toward a house where a jueteng draw is taking place. He wears a T-shirt that proclaims: "*Ituloy ang laban*!—FPJ (Continue the fight!)," a slogan that made the rounds after the death of Fernando Poe Jr. whose frustrated presidential run spelled frustration for the millions of poor who saw him as an icon of their hopes.

And in the movie's close, as Amy takes a day off to visit the grave of her dead son, she leaves his plot to cool off then witnesses an altercation between two hot-headed drivers, one of whom brandishes a gun. The gun wielder shoots blindly into the crowd, the bullet grazing Amy's shoulder but hitting a teenager behind her. Amy walks away dazed, trying to make sense of the mayhem.

Life is a jueteng game for the poor—filled with random, senseless violence, fear and suspicion; but also with compassion and tolerance, hopes and endless dreams.

* * *

DIRECTOR Jeffrey Jeturian has always been a skilled cinematic storyteller. Even his sex romps, such as "Bridal Shower" and "Bikini Open," proceed smoothly and contain biting social commentary that is worked in subtly and not pummeled into the viewer.

But in "Kubrador," he has shown the maturity of his gifts. Using naturalistic camera movements and working with live sound, he gives the film a documentary feel. He brings the audience into the seamy streets and dark alleys of a slum, neither disguising nor exploiting the squalor and the poverty.

In Gina Pareño, who was awarded "Best Actress" in an international film festival held in India, Jeturian has found his perfect "Amy." She so embodies the street-smart and resourceful *kubrador* that it is hard to imagine any other performer in the role. The years may have padded her features (though added to her buxom beauty), but Pareño remains a compelling performer. It is hard to take one's eyes off her, dominant is she onscreen.

Pareño is aided by a remarkable cast of supporting actors, who lend authenticity and sympathy to the urban poor dwellers they bring to life, and whose stories of desperation they must tell.

Impeachment as a truth procedure

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

I DO NOT SHARE THE VIEW OF THE CATHOLIC Bishops' Conference of the Philippines that impeachment cannot yield any truth unless it is performed according to fair rules and with the common good in mind. I believe that the impeachment of any president, no matter how it is conducted, can be an important source of political truths. It can teach us many truths about our politicians, our political system, the State, and the power that is latent in every citizen. It is these truths that ultimately prod people to act intelligently and to respond decisively to political crises.

Impeachment is both a legal and a political event. It is legal in the sense that it is explicitly prescribed by our Constitution as the proper way to remove a sitting president who stands accused of high crimes and betrayal of the public trust. It is political in at least two senses. First, in the sense that its judgment of guilt or innocence is determined ultimately by a parliamentary majority. Second, and more important, in the sense that its proceedings are addressed to a collective subject—"the people"—whose allegiance the government endeavors to keep. Impeachment gives the people a chance to reflect on the acceptability of those who make decisions in their name.

Before I go any further, let me state for the record that I am one of those who recently filed the second impeachment complaint against Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. I believe in constitutional processes like impeachment and elections as much as I believe in people power uprisings. I was among the first to suggest in 2000 that Joseph Estrada be made accountable for his actions through an impeachment process. I also participated in Edsa I and Edsa II.

The fact that Estrada commanded majorities in both houses of Congress did not discourage us from filing an impeachment case against him then. Why should Ms Arroyo's vaunted control of the House of Representatives deter us now? Political events are dynamic and open-ended. They acquire meanings in the public mind and produce outcomes that cannot be fully anticipated.

The impeachment of Erap was aborted when Edsa II intervened and proceeded to pass its own judgment. The result was the ouster of an incumbent president who had a valid electoral mandate, and the legalization of what was basically an unconstitutional act. Edsa II would not have happened if it had not been preceded by the impeachment. I can only suppose that the replication of this fatal sequence is what scares Ms Arroyo today.

But what kind of truths did the impeachment of Erap reveal that the public did not already know? Hardly any actually. The people followed the trial on live television for the dramatic testimonies that would confirm what they already knew from the mass media. But the impeachment confirmed something else—the brittleness of Erap's power. This is the truth that all political events bring out—a measure of the power that one is opposing. This power tends by nature to exaggerate itself. Only a political event can compel it to reveal its true extent.

By the time the prosecutors staged the walk-out that aborted the trial, Erap's charisma had already dimmed; his authority over the key institutions of the State—the armed forces and the police, the bureaucracy, the judiciary, and indeed the legislature—had also weakened. Sensing this, the key players and plotters of Edsa II acted swiftly, brought in the military, and swore in Ms Arroyo as successor before Erap could start to gather his political forces. The outrage of his mass supporters exploded three months later, by which time a new administration was already securely in place.

Having arrived in Malacañang by this route, Ms Arroyo knows, perhaps more than anyone else, what damage an impeachment trial can do to someone like her whose claim to authority rests on nothing solid. That is why last year, when she was most vulnerable, she did everything imaginable to kill the impeachment case before it could reach first base. The short-circuiting of the whole process through calibrated payoffs was so brazen and persistent it could have set off a political explosion at any point. But Ms Arroyo was never complacent. She worked hard to ensure, first of all, the loyalty of the military commanders. One by one, she visited the leaders of the various churches, and repeatedly wooed the Catholic bishops. She leaned on the judiciary, and called on the debt of gratitude of those she had put in high positions. She bought her way into the hearts of local government officials, and obtained the support of a large section of the media.

Last year's shortened impeachment gave us a peek into the power structure of our society. It revealed the deep complicity of our basic institutions in the political survival of Ms Arroyo. It showed how much the middle class has allowed itself to be softened and bent, and restrained from acting by its fear of the masses. These are painful truths, but they are worth learning even more today as Ms Arroyo goes on the offensive and deploys the coercive power of the State to create a climate of terror.

In time, we may begin to understand what Alexis de Tocqueville wrote about the corroding effects of illegitimate power. "Men are not corrupted by the exercise of power, or debased by the habit of obedience, but by the exercise of a power which they believe to be illegitimate, and by the obedience to a rule which they consider to be usurped and oppressive." This we must resist.

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Comments to public.lives@gmail.com

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Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Avoiding rainy season illnesses

THE SHOWERS BROUGHT ON BY THE ONSET OF THE RAINY SEASON IN THE COUNTRY are a welcome change from the withering heat of the summer months. But too much rain over the past month when four typhoons—Ester, Florita, Glenda and Henry—visited the country, has its downside. One is flooding, which has claimed lives and destroyed property, infrastructure and crops, and another is a host of diseases.

Among the diseases associated with the rainy season are influenza, diarrhea, leptospirosis and dengue.

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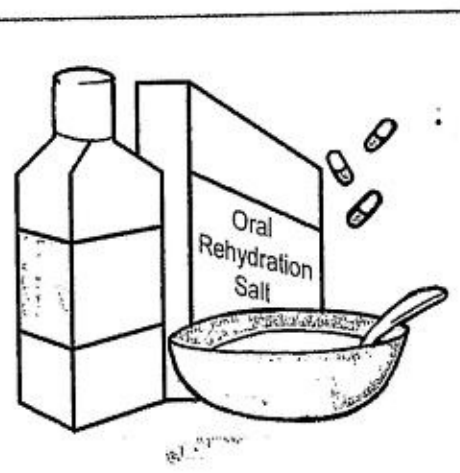

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Watch out for WILD

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Officer-in-Charge, National Epidemiology Center, Department of Health

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Health Secretary Francisco T. Duque III has issued a nationwide dengue alert in June and an influenza alert in July. The public is encouraged to take necessary precautions to control dengue and stop the flu.

INFLUENZA

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What to do

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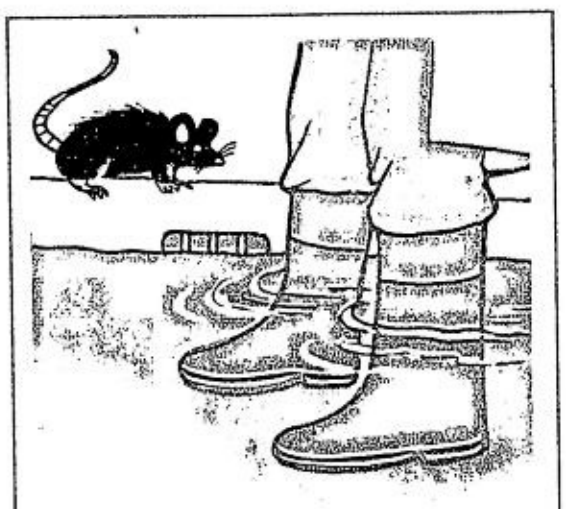

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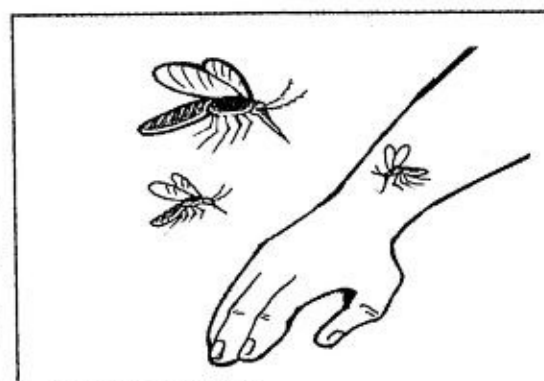

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Any suspected case of dengue should be reported to the nearest health center. This alerts the community to start their "cleanup drive."

Fogging or community-wide insecticide spraying is discouraged. This is expensive and not consistently effective.

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TALK of the TOWN

Please send feedback to jsarmiento@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Juan V. Sarmiento Jr.

Avoiding rainy season illnesses

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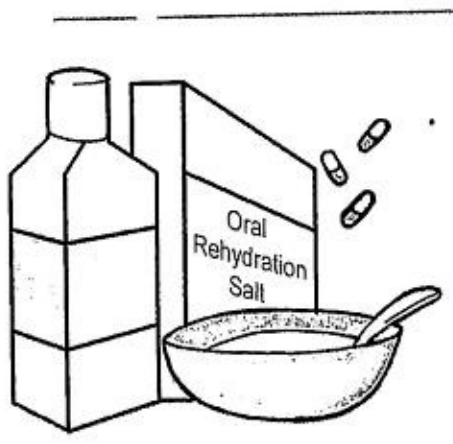

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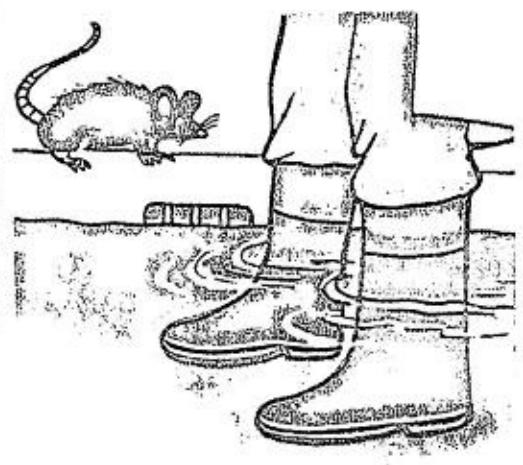

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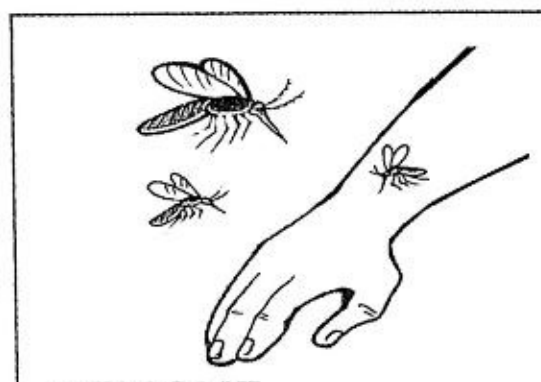

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HONEST pedicab driver Buenaventura with his son.
MARLON RAMOS/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

'Tagaytay 5' enter 100 days in detention; cry daily torture

LUCENA CITY—THE SO-CALLED "TAGAYTAY 5," five farmers who had been accused of rebellion, mark their 100th day behind bars today (Sunday) amid the "daily psychological terror and violence," the five said in a statement e-mailed to the INQUIRER by the wife of one of them.

"Life behind bars is never a good trip although this is a thousand, or even a million, times better than being one of the almost 700 victims of state-sponsored extra-judicial killings," said the statement forwarded to the INQUIRER by Laura Sarmiento, wife of Aristides Sarmiento, one of the Tagaytay 5 prisoners.

The five prisoners complained that psychological terror and violence was being unleashed at them almost daily at the Camp Vicente Lim detention cell and it was now exacting its toll on them.

The five are all family breadwinners.

"Nightmarish memories of our gruesome interrogation, torture and incommunicado period are slowly receding; only to be replaced by equally painful experience of Enrico Ybañez's losing a leukemia-stricken wife without having been given a chance to console her during the last moments of her life," the political prisoners said.

They also complained of the "whimsical shooing away" of their visitors, whom they said traveled all the way for four to six hours only to be driven away by police custodians after seeing them for only ten to 15 minutes.

According to the detainees, rules on visitation change almost on a weekly basis, which results in undue tension to them and their families.

"There are no provisions for visitors' area, no outdoor exercises and sunlight. We are padlocked on a 24/7 basis, on a 5 x 6-square-meter cell, with minimum ventilation, thus endangering our health," the group's e-mail statement said.

Sarmiento, Ybañez, Axel Alejandro Pinpin, Riel Custodio and Michael Masayes, now called as the Tagaytay 5, were arrested on April 28 somewhere in Tagaytay City by police and military agents.

After several days of being held incommunicado, they were later presented to the media as New People's Army guerrillas engaged purportedly in an antigovernment "destabilization plot" out to disrupt the Labor Day rallies.

However, the five have since denied the accusation.

Sarmiento, Pinpin and Custodio claimed they were all peasant leaders from Cavite out to buy farm equipment when they were arrested. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Pedicab man returns bag with ₱104,000

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ROSARIO, CAVITE—JOSE BUEnaventura's 35th birthday celebration on Friday could have been the merriest in his life.

The day before, the pedicab driver found P104,000 in a white plastic bag on a busy street in Barangay Silangan 2 here.

Buenaventura said he was driving his pedicab along Tramo Street after lunch at home when he noticed the bag near a garbage bin at about 11 a.m.

Thinking that the bag contained more than garbage, he drove back and picked up the item.

To his surprise, the plastic bag contained the money in P100, P500 and P1,000 denominations.

He could have used the money to buy food and beverage, and invited all his friends and relatives to party.

The money is also more than enough to buy a TV set that his only son had fervently wished for on his fourth birthday on Aug. 26.

But keeping the money never crossed his mind, Buenaventura said.

Safekeeping

"I thought of the money's safety right away. It could be intended for something important or the hospitalization of the owner's child," Buenaventura told the INQUIRER.

Instead of going home, Buenaventura rushed to the office of Rosario Vice Mayor Jose Rozel Hernandez to seek help in locating the owner of the money.

Buenaventura left the money to the care of Hernandez and returned to where he found it.

There, he found six-month pregnant Carolina Distor, who was frantically searching for the P104,000.

Distor said the money was for down payment for a house that she and her husband were buying. The money fell from a motorcycle that the couple was riding.

Buenaventura instantly became a town hero.

On Friday, Buenaventura handed over the money to Distor in simple rites held after Mass.

Buenaventura's life is tough. His wife left him more than two years ago.

He stopped working as a security guard in 1992 and turned to driving a pedicab, earning P150-200 in 12 hours. Buenaventura rents the pedicab for P40.

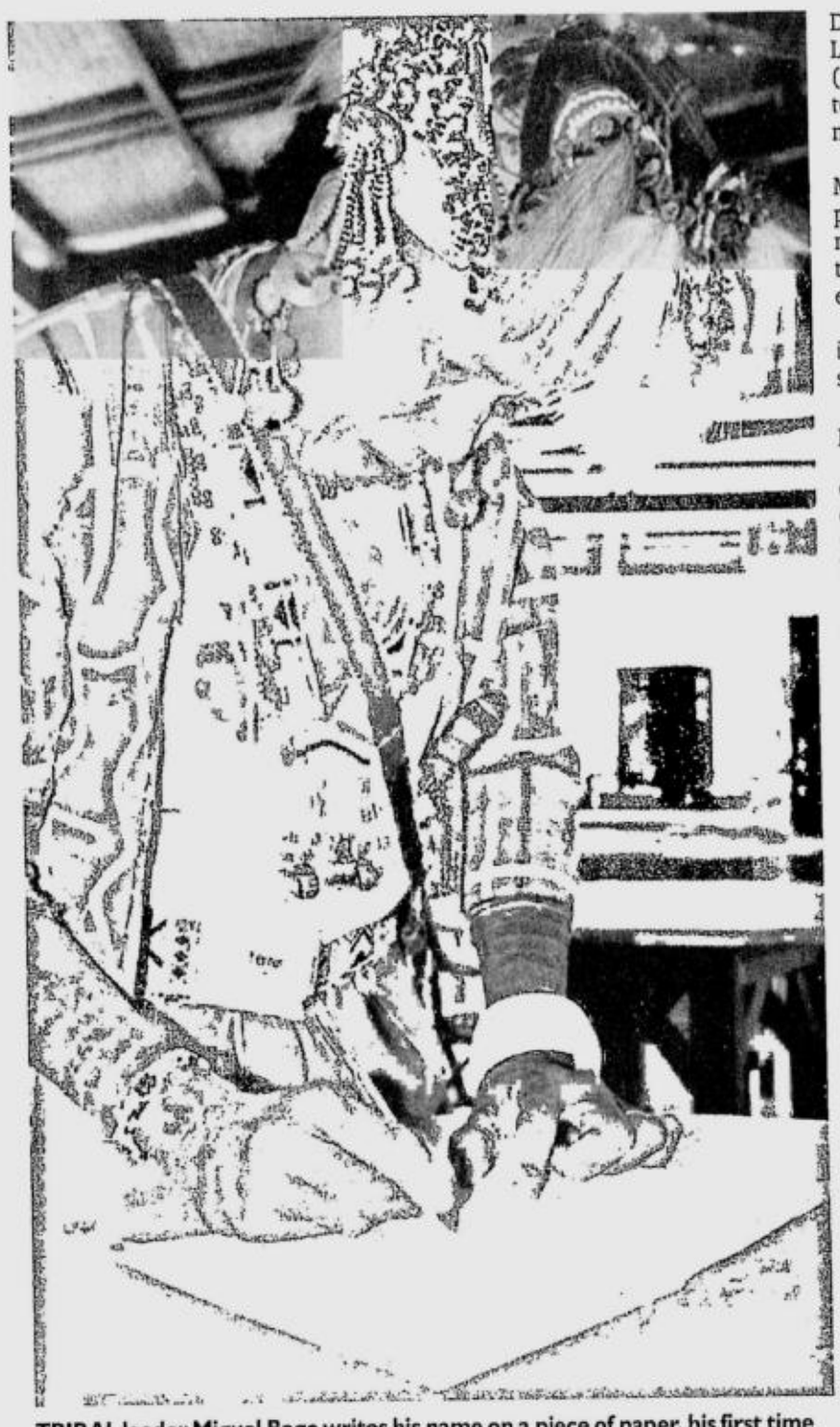
He lives in a ramshackle house that doesn't even have a stove.

His mother Elma said she was proud of her son.

"Although we needed the money, he chose to be honest and did the best thing," said Elma.

Distor gave Buenaventura P10,000 as reward.

Mayors' group backs education for tribal folk



TRIBAL leader Miguel Bago writes his name on a piece of paper, his first time to do it. Bago had attended special classes held with indigenous peoples' in mind.
DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

DAVAO CITY—AN OFFICIAL OF THE League of Municipalities in the Philippines (LMP) has urged his fellow local executives to support education initiatives for Indigenous Peoples (IPs).

LMP secretary general and Angono, Rizal Mayor Gerardo Calderon said they are set to pass a resolution encouraging municipal mayors in some of the 1,500 municipalities that have IP communities to support the IP education.

Calderon said the move was aimed at giving the IPs more attention to their need for self-improvement and education.

Last year, the LMP came out with the idea of putting up a "Mayors Development Center."

Calderon said the center has helped in coming up with ways of improving their communities and incorporating best practices that have been proven successful and beneficial in other areas.

This time, he said, the center will focus on the IPs.

He said making the LGUs do its primary role in protecting the welfare of its people, particularly the IPs, would get rid of the tendency of local governments of being too dependent on the national government for basic services.

He said a crash course on "strategic management and effective governance" will be taught to the IP communities with the aim of improving their lot, but with emphasis on preserving their cultural heritage.

Al Santos, of the Schools of Indigenous Knowledge and Traditions (Sikat), a national network of tribal schools located in remote upland areas, said funding sources in putting up the education facilities will be depleted in time.

And the education for the IPs, introduced in 45 pilot schools across the country, Santos said, might just be put to waste if not continued.

Datu Miguel Bago, 52, of the Matigsalog tribe in Bukidnon province, said he himself is a student trying to learn new things.

"I think education is important, but I will tell the youth (fellow tribe) not to leave the culture their elders have known through the ages," he said, while showing his scribbled name in a notepad, his first time ever to write it down. *Dennis Jay Santos, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Kidnapped Pagadian trader freed with MILF help

PAGADIAN CITY—A BUSINESSMAN WHO was kidnapped on July 23 was released Thursday morning after more than a week of negotiations, a National Bureau of Investigation official said.

Lawyer Moises Tamayo, chief of the NBI here, said businessman Jaime Berdon was released without ransom in Mamaanun village in Piagapo town in Lanao del Sur after authorities sought the help of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) who negotiated with the kidnappers.

Tamayo said they identified one of the accomplices in the kidnapping as one Tahir Panakawan through the Land Bank account the suspects gave to the family after they asked P5,000 to pay for "board and lodging expenses."

Tamayo said Panakawan is a Moro National Liberation Front integree now assigned to the Army's 4th Division.

Reports from the military, Tamayo said, indicated that Panakawan was in Piagapo on July 28 and reported back to camp on July 30.

A surveillance report of the NBI revealed that the victim was moved from one place to another in Piagapo allegedly by Pacasum Dimaporo and Nader Dimaporo, whom they identified as relatives of Panakawan.

Tamayo said they coordinated with the MILF after learning that the victim was being held inside a known area of the rebel group. *Michael F. Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Sanchez man says gov ready for breakup with Palace

CALAMBA CITY—THE PROVINCIAL administrator of Batangas belittled reports that his governor, Armand Sanchez, was falling out of the graces of Malacañang and challenged Sanchez's detractor, Vice Gov. Ricky Recto, to instead identify who in Malacañang was his source on the reports.

"In case the Palace drops Sanchez, we will be ready," said lawyer Ronaldo Geron, Batangas' provincial administrator.

"What can we do if Malacañang decides to drop its support for the governor?"

Recto earlier said the appointment of a police chief for the province who was not on the list of Sanchez's recommended officers was an indication that Malacañang was dropping Sanchez "like a hot potato."

"His (Recto's) statements are just speculations. It may or may not be true. But who are we to say (which is true)," Geron said over the phone on Friday. "He cannot even name the Palace officials who allegedly dropped their support to the governor."

He said they were optimistic that they still had the backing of Malacañang as the governor is associated with the pro-Arroyo faction of the Liberal Party.

LP sources said it was Sanchez who had financed the gathering in Manila of LP members who broke off from LP president Franklin Drilon.

The same sources said Palace officials knew that Sanchez had also provided financial help to LP members who are opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Geron said Malacañang's actions on the protest of Sanchez against the appointment of the new police provincial director of Batangas would be a good parameter to see if the governor still had the support of the administration.

Geron also denied reports that the choice of the new provincial police director of Batangas had something to do with the alleged "jueteng" turf war in the province.

He said Sanchez's choice of Senior Supt. Jose Erwin Villacorte was part of security preparations for the governor.

Sanchez, he said, did not know Senior Supt. Edmund Zaide, the officer in charge of the Batangas police, personally and that they had never met.

Zaide is said to be a protege of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, a native of Balayan, Batangas.

"The bottom line here is trust. After the failed assassination on him, the governor wants somebody who he can trust as his provincial police chief," Geron said in an earlier interview.

Sanchez escaped death when his Hummer exploded while he was leaving the provincial capitol on June 1.

Two of his aides were killed while the governor suffered second degree burns.

The bombing remains unsolved. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Slow action on erosion

BAGUIO CITY—The Baguio Country Club (BCC) has put the city government to task for the slow action on an eroding slope that threatens one of its buildings as well as the houses below it. Malou Galiste, assistant executive manager of BCC, said the BCC was willing to initially shoulder the restoration of the eroded slope protection wall. Mayor Braulio Yaranon has assured BCC that the city government has money for the project, Galiste said. The city council, however, said it would ask the Mines and Geosciences Bureau to investigate before it authorized a fund release for the repair. Galiste said a landslide would destroy the BCC's utility building and bury 29 houses at the Barangay Country Club.
Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

PNP-Mimaropa office

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Philippine National Police-Mimaropa (Mindoro-Marinduque-Romblon-Palawan) office will be transferred to the 10-hectare compound of the PNP provincial headquarters in Barangay Suqui here, according to Senior Supt. Marcos Flores, Oriental Mindoro police director. PNP chief Director General Oscar Calderon will be one of the guests during the groundbreaking ceremony on Aug. 15. The regional office is at present at the PNP-Calabarzon (Cavite-Laguna-Batangas-Rizal-Quezon) headquarters at Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna.
Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Murder suspect falls

STA. ROSA CITY—Agents of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested on Tuesday a murder suspect who had been hiding for the past 15 years in Gen. Mariano Alvarez, Cavite. The suspect, Joselito Abalos, 41, a native of Barangay Inirangan, Bayambang, Pangasinan, was arrested in a raid on his sister's house in Barangay Nicolasa Virata in Gen. Mariano Alvarez town at around 7:30 a.m. He was presented to the media at the NBI office here by Olivo Ramos, NBI-Laguna chief. Ramos said Abalos was one of two suspects who hacked dead Aurelio Raguindin during a heated argument while drinking on March 25, 1991. Judge Bonifacio Bueno of the San Carlos City Regional Trial Court issued the warrant for his arrest.
Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

2 cops killed in blast

DUMAGUETE CITY—Two policemen and a suspected holdup man were killed as they grappled over a hand grenade that eventually exploded in Barangay Bagtic, Mabinay at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday. Four other persons were wounded. Senior Supt. Melvin Ramon Buenafe, provincial police director, identified those killed as SPO2 Edner Tumapa, SPO1 Edmundo Banong and a certain Toto. Wounded were Insp. Teodorico Picardal, Mabinay police chief; PO1 Eduardo Banong, PO1 Ferdinand Alipan, and one Burlaza. The suspect eluded policemen at about 10 a.m. that day in Barangay Lumbangan after he and two others earlier robbed a certain Bogart Colina of P15,000 cash, jewelry and a green Toyota Corolla in Barangay Azagra in Tanjay City.
Alex V. Pal and Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Church robbers strike

BACOLOD CITY—The statues of two saints lost their heads while another was stripped of its clothes by unidentified robbers who broke into the San Antonio Abad Church on Lacson Street in Barangay 39, this city, on Monday. Msgr. Victorino Rivas, vicar general of the Diocese of Bacolod, appealed to those who were approached to buy the stolen parts of the sacred images to immediately report the matter to the police. Rivas said they did not even know the motive for the robbery as the statues were not antiques. "Those who steal sacred images usually encounter misfortunes in life," he warned.
Carla P. Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Smuggling foiled

CEBU CITY—Aviation security police on Thursday arrested two Chinese for possession of fake Samsung cellular phones at the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA). Hua Xing Xu, 27, and Ri Guang Xu, 31, were caught with 163 fake cell phones hidden in a stroller bag. They arrived here from Hong Kong on July 29 and were to take a noon flight back when they were arrested shortly before 10 a.m. Supt. Jose Cosio Jr., chief of the Police Center for Aviation Security, said the two were intercepted after an X-ray machine indicated that they could be bringing out illegal items.
Jolene R. Bulambot, PDI Visayas Bureau

Cebu priest faces child abuse charges

By Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE PARENTS OF A 13-year-old altar boy will file child abuse charges against the parish priest of Santander, Cebu for allegedly maltreating the boy.

Fr. Jovencio Rabusa allegedly hit the boy in a fit of anger because the altar boy gave him the wrong booklet during the final prayer for the Mass that the priest was officiating at the town's parish church on July 30.

The boy's father, SPO1 Manuel Regulacion, a policeman assigned in Santander, had told town officials that he would file a complaint against the priest at the Cebu Archdiocese for maltreating his son by shoving his two fingers in his son's face.

Rabusa, upon learning of the policeman's plan, sought a dialogue with the boy's parents on Thursday night and asked for their forgiveness. The priest also promised to issue a public apology during this Sunday's Mass at the parish church.

Rabusa said in a radio interview Saturday that he was sorry he shoved his two fingers in the boy's face and that the boy's parents had accepted his apology.

Regulacion, however, said he decided to file a complaint in court after his son admitted to him that he was not just shoved in the face but was hit in the mouth by the priest.

Regulacion said the incident happened as the enraged priest was confronting his son over the latter's mistake after the Mass.

Rabusa had said he was "carried away" by his anger because the altar boy failed to comply with his assigned task for the Mass. The boy, according to the priest, was to give him the booklet needed for the final blessing. The churchgoers were already waiting but when he looked for the booklet the altar boy had left at the sacristy, Rabusa said.

As he entered the sacristy after the Mass, Rabusa said he saw his two altar boys quarreling and blaming each other for what had happened.

Rabusa admitted that he blew his top and he unintentionally uttered the word "*maayo mo panungbagon* (I'd like to hit both of you)."

But Rabusa said he did not punch Regulacion's son but just "pushed" his face with two fingers.

Rabusa also apologized to Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal and would have visited the Cardinal yesterday but Vidal was in Manila.

JOAN BONDOC

TRIUMPH
The will to overcome brings residents of Candaba, Pampanga to the middle of a flooded street where a sign on top a jeep that says "Victory, Philippines" could be serving as their inspiration. The town was under water after storm "Henry" brought heavy rains to Central Luzon.

Calabarzon employers OK P10 wage hike

STA. ROSA CITY—MAJORITY OF businesses and investors in the Calabarzon gave their nod to the recent wage increase in the region which gave employees an average of P10.50 more in their daily wages, officials said on Wednesday.

Lawyer Maximo Lim, director of the Department of Labor and Employment in Calabarzon, said that during consultations with business groups, most of the executives of businesses in the region expressed their support to the new wage order, which will take effect on Aug. 7.

"If there was any opposition, it was very minimal," Lim told the INQUIRER during his meeting with the Laguna Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) held at the Laguna Technopark Hotel here.

He said although some companies were concerned with the effect of the wage increase on their businesses, they eventually realized that the wage increase "was both fair to the employees and the employers."

"We tried very hard to be fair. Although the increases are moderate, it is a very balanced wage increase which considered comparable wages (in other regions)," Lim added.

Ed Nicolas, LCCI director, said their members were concerned on the effect of the wage hike on the cost of production and cost of doing business in the Calabarzon growth areas.

Nicolas, the assistant vice president of Toyota Corp., said because of the salary increase, manufacturing firms might be compelled to raise the prices of their products.

"The salary increase may be minimal. But if you have thousands of employees, it would cost the company millions of pesos to implement it," Nicolas explained.

Danny Pancho, LCCI vice president, said they were confident that all the 127 members of their group can abide by the order of the DOLE to implement the wage increase next week.

"So far, none have signified their intentions to file for exemption. Maybe some small businesses (might opt to do so)," Pancho said.

Lim said the new and incoming employees would benefit most from the new wage increase as their salary will be the same with regular employees.

Under the new wage order, workers employed in the growth corridor areas—composed of three cities and eight municipalities in Cavite, Laguna and Rizal—would get a P6 to P18 increase.

From the current P149 to P266 minimum wage, employees in these areas will receive daily wages ranging from P167 to P272.

Workers in Bacoor and Imus towns in Cavite, San Pedro and Biñan in Laguna, and Cainta and Taytay in Rizal will get a P10 increase in their daily salaries.

Except for Lucena City, workers in Quezon province and other "resource-based areas" in the region will get increases of P3 to P8 a day. Employees in Lucena City will get a P18 hike in their daily salary. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Mining law repeal far-fetched, says legislator

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—CONGRESS IS NOT likely to repeal the Mining Act despite pressure from some Church leaders and environmental groups, an antimining congressman said Friday.

Marinduque Rep. Edmundo Reyes Jr. said the repeal of Republic Act 7942 or the Mining Act of 1995 is "far-fetched."

"It will not be repealed in the immediate future," Reyes said in a press conference here Friday following a forum on mining organized by the Archdiocese of Jaro.

Reyes said the Arroyo administration has "made it clear that mining is one of the industries that can help us get out from weak economic position right now."

He said the government expects annual earnings from mining to reach between $5-7 billion.

Until there is an industry that can bring in similar revenues, the government will allow large-scale mining to continue, said Reyes.

Party-list congressmen have filed several bills seeking to repeal the law but Reyes said even if Congress enacts the bill, the President could still exercise her veto powers.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) on Jan. 29 issued a pastoral letter reiterating its position issued in 1998 calling for the repeal of the mining law.

In its statement, the CBCP said the Mining Act "destroys life." The bishops said that mining "threatens people's health and environmental safety through the wanton dumping of waste and tailings in rivers and seas."

They said there is no safeguard against environmental tragedies and accidents despite the assurance of the Arroyo administration.

The CBCP also said residents in communities with mining operations are subjected to human rights violations and economic deprivation.

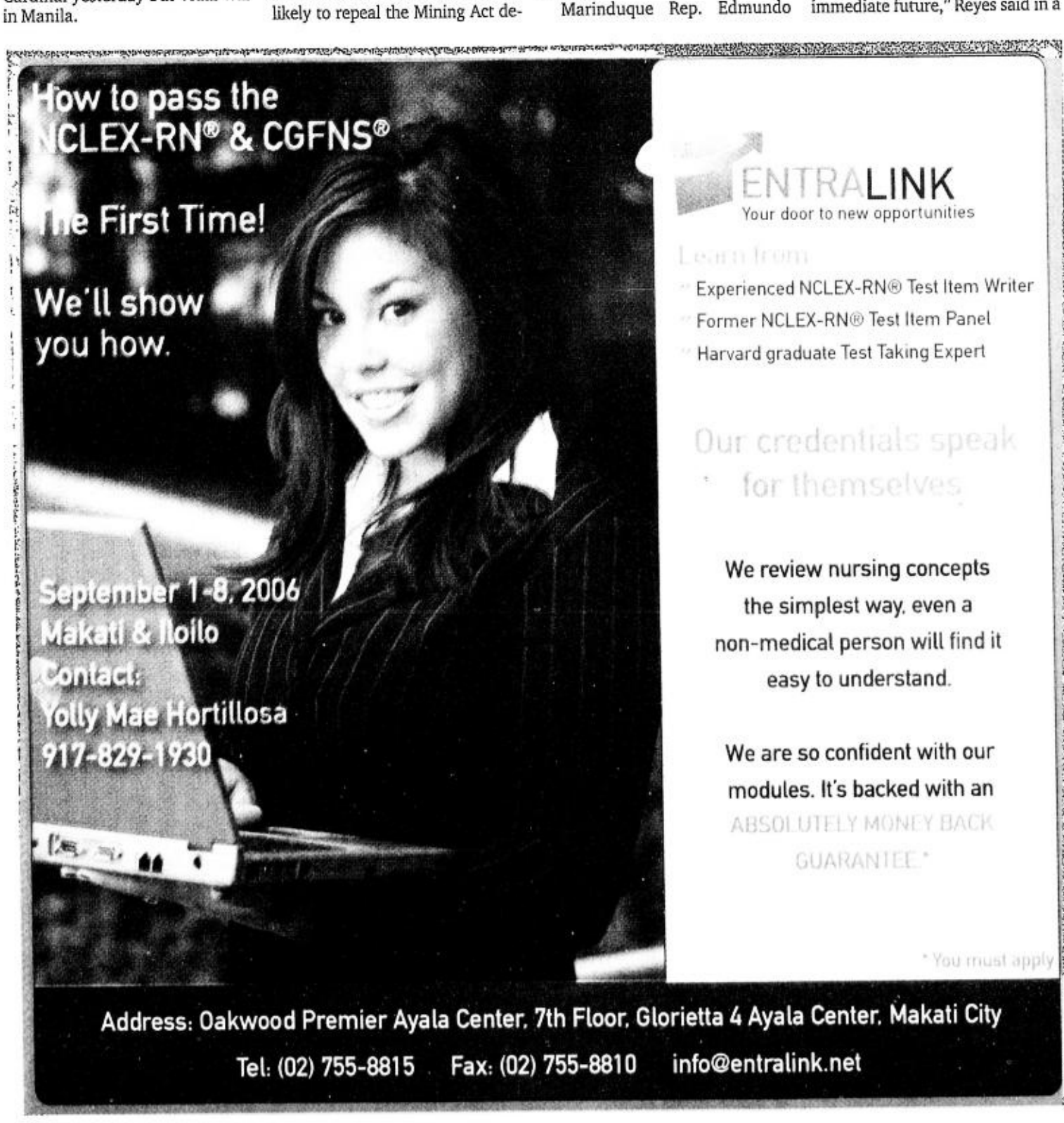
It called for the stop to 24 priority mining projects of the government and the closure of large-scale mining projects.

But mining firms have warned that heeding the call of the bishops would result in loss of jobs and livelihood for millions of people and would also drive away investors.

Reyes said because of the difficulty in repealing the Mining Act, campaigns against mining should be directed at the grassroots, especially in areas with ongoing or proposed mining projects.

He said local executives and legislators have to take a stand on the issue at each proposed mining area.

"This will be the battle ground," said Reyes.



Davao burn unit pleads for medicines, funding

DAVAO CITY—THE DAVAO Medical Center's burn unit, considered one of its kind in the country, is a serious case: It is in dire need of medicines and equipment to serve poor patients.

"Our burn unit is considered the best benefit for Mindanao but we really need support," said Dr. Rizal Aportadera, a volunteer surgeon and director of the Mindanao Burn Center since 1990.

Established in July 2000, the 25-bed Mindanao Burn Center is the largest facility of its kind on the island. Aportadera and his daughter Michelle Marie, a reconstructive surgeon, are its only consultants.

Aportadera said poor patients could not afford expensive medicines, such as antibiotics and creams, which could not be subsidized by the center's meager budget.

Even with the assistance of the Maharlika Charity Foundation and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, the center's needs remain hardly met, he said.

"Imagine a patient with 60-percent burn in his body needs at least a jar of flammacerium cream that costs around P4,000 each day," Aportadera told the INQUIRER.

The center also badly needs infusion pumps, burn dressing materials, milk, eggs and food supplements, toys and reading materials. *Joselle Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

E-mail: inq_davao@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Mindanao

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Nico A. Alconaba

Agusan honors installation art pioneer

By Ramon Jorge Sarabosing
Butuan City

AGUSAN DEL NORTE'S most illustrious son in the field of visual arts has come home and, fittingly, his land of birth recently bestowed upon him the honor of being one of its most outstanding citizens.

Luis Yee, 64, more known as Junyee, has carved himself as one of the few elite senior artists in the country.

He, however, is one artist that cannot be pigeonholed. He is not the kind who, after being acknowledged of his or her particular subject, style or trademark, sticks to it till eternity.

"I don't like to be predictable. I am uncomfortable with trademark pieces. I think an artist should explore what possibilities he can do," he said.

Wood is his forte and he considers himself a wood sculptor first and foremost, though he has stood out in painting, cartooning, architecture, curatorship, the academe and organizing.

A graduate of fine arts from the University of the Philippines Diliman in the 1960s, Junyee is acknowledged as a pioneer in installation art in the country in the 1980s. Installation art is a new art expression using indigenous materials and elements put together in a wide space to come up with a cohesive idea or image.

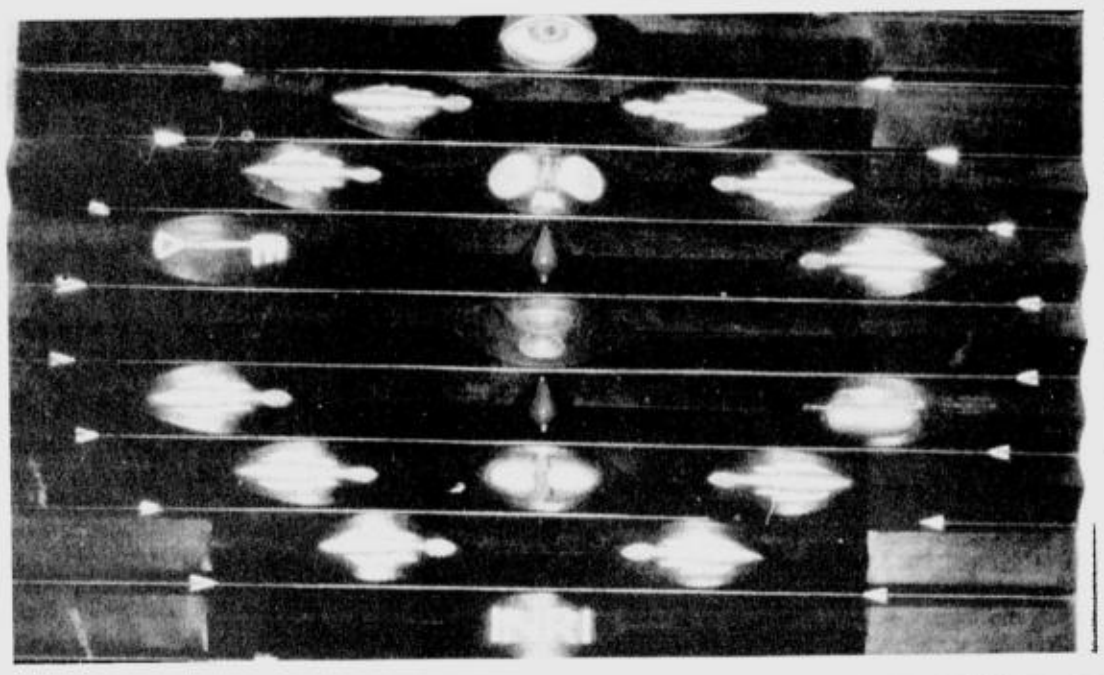
As one art critic puts it, being a participant in an installation art show is like entering a magical realm where one is challenged to think and observe.

Junyee's works never fail to enthrall audiences and critics from France, Japan, Cuba, Hong Kong, Australia and elsewhere.

In an invitational exhibition in Japan, he was the lone Filipino installation artist featured with four other distinguished Asian artists.

"We used bamboo. It was our unifying material to showcase our Asian artistry and roots," he said.

Back home, Junyee's works are hailed by respected artists like Impy Pilapil and Alice Guillermo.



"LAST Supper" on wood by JunYee.
PHOTOS BY RAMON JORGE SARABOSING

ARTIST Luis Yee, more known as JunYee.

What is the story behind the man who remains humble and recluse despite the numerous honors, awards and recognition of peers, institutions and collectors?

Born to a Chinese migrant and a local maiden from Cabadbaran, Agusan del Norte, Junyee has always known what he wanted.

"I dreamed of becoming an artist even since I was a child. I wanted to be like Michaelangelo. He was my idol. I read all about him when I was in high school and I wanted to follow his path," he said.

But his businessman father would not hear of it, so he had no choice but to leave home and do odd jobs in Cebu, hoping to study fine arts.

To his dismay, there was no fine arts course there at that time. "I was forced to go to Manila even if it seemed so far away."

Manila became his home for decades and has since exhibited in major galleries and museums, not to mention winning prestigious art competitions through the years.

Interestingly, Junyee's name is almost alien to the young crop of artists who scan the newspaper art pages. Art functions are alien to him, but he does love to teach and interact with young artists.

"I do hope to stay here longer and help out the new generation of local artists," he said.

Surely, it would be a big push to the local aspiring artists when that wish is realized. They would surely look up to him like when he did to Michaelangelo.

'I am uncomfortable with trademark pieces. I think an artist should explore what possibilities he can do'

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Longing for Lebanon

By Germelina Lacorte
Davao City

RIGHT NOW, ALL THEY REALLY WANT IS FOR THE war to stop so they can go back home and continue life where they left off.

Anthony Ballouz, 18, and his brother, Ronald, 16, expressed this wish as they watched footage of downtown Beirut on TV inside their mother's house in Buhangin District in Davao City, where they sought refuge from the war that broke out between Israeli troops and Hezbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon.

The brothers are among the Filipino-Lebanese children whose families have been torn apart by the war.

Their father George Ballouz, a Lebanese businessman, had to stay behind as his three children fled Beirut for Syria, where they took a Jordanian Aviation flight to Davao and joined their mother and youngest brother who had left days before.

Epifania Alino-Ballouz arrived on July 11, or two days before Israeli warplanes bombed Lebanon's airport.

State of shock

"Everyone's in a state of shock, trying to get out of the place as fast as they can," Ronald said of the air strikes.

"We can hear the explosions two blocks away, we can feel the ground shaking," said Anthony. "We packed our things and got them ready in a car."

"Later, we evacuated to the southern part of Beirut, but even there, we can hear the bombardments," he added.

Recounting their ordeal, Anthony said that before their escape, they had to stay overnight at a monastery, where over 150 people scheduled for evacuation the following day slept. The road to Syria in the east had been bombed and was no longer passable, so they had to take a detour to the north and down. It took them 11 hours to reach Damascus.

Contact

Reaching Davao on July 26, the boys continued to keep in touch with their father and their friends in Lebanon, through the telephone and Internet.

Although the boys had been to Davao on occasional visits in the past, they have known no other home except the one they left behind, according to Epifania.

The Ballouzes live in the eastern side of Beirut, considered the Christian part of the capital but very near the border with the Muslim community.

"We live in the part where you can hear church bells ringing on Sundays and the Muslim call to prayers at the mosque five times on Fridays," Epifania said.

Epifania, a nurse who has been living in Lebanon for the past 21 years, said her boys belonged to the Christian group Youth for Christ.

"I know how difficult it is in a war, so I've sent for the children here," Epifania said.

She would have wanted her husband to take refuge in the Philippines, too, but the Philippine government has been giving priority to its citizens.

Hard decision

Anthony said leaving Lebanon would be a very hard decision for his father to make.

"If you live in a certain country your whole life, you have your family, your relatives and friends there," he said.

"He has his home, his brothers there. It's not that easy to leave."

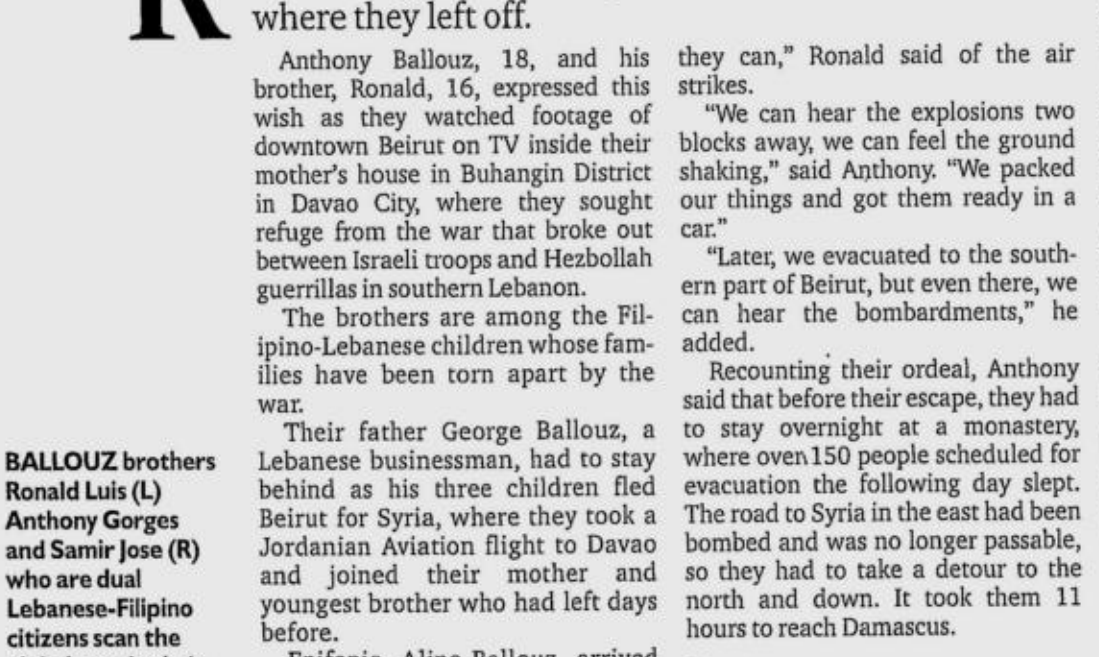
Anthony said their departure for Davao was also difficult to decide because he had many friends there. Last week, his friends e-mailed him to say they were about to go out of the city to some remote areas to hide. There would be no telephone lines or Internet there and they would not be able to reach him, he was told.

"I miss life in Lebanon," Anthony said, still suffering from jet lag after the 15-hour flight.

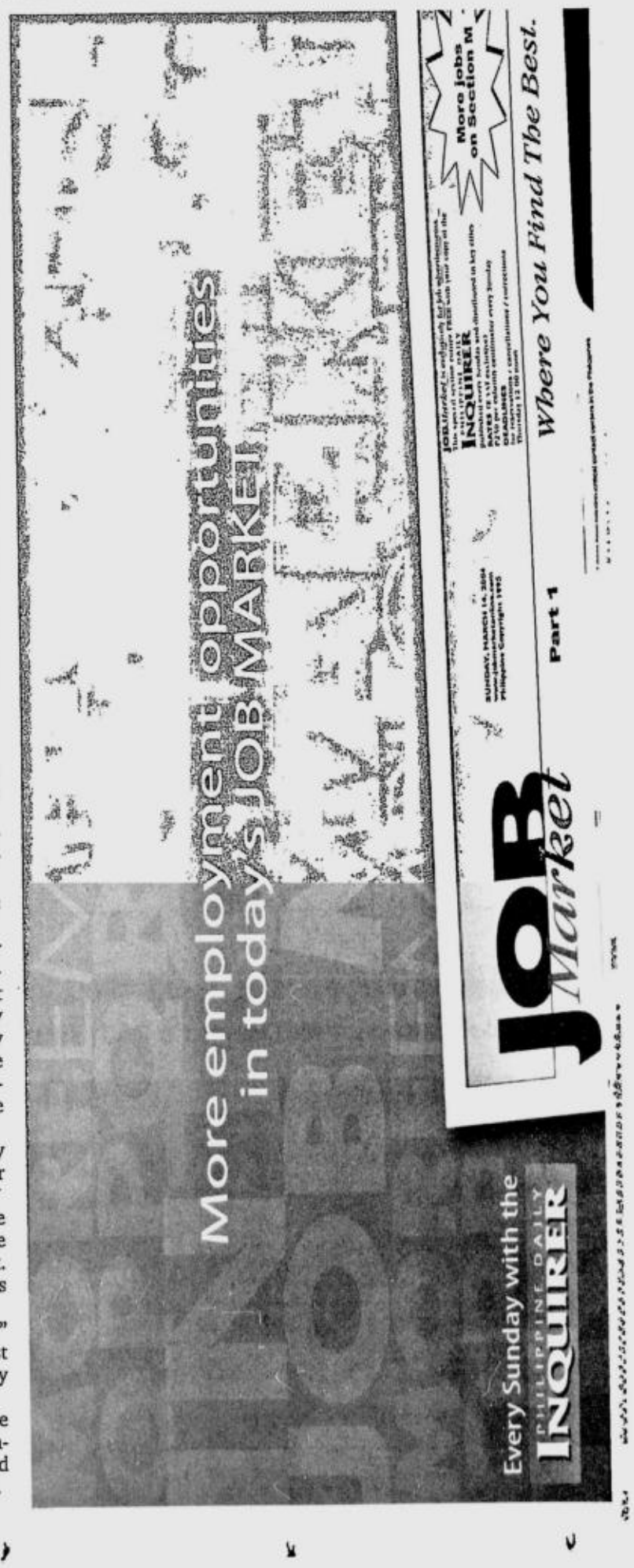
If it were not for the war, he said he would be with his friends touring the malls or just staying home to relax. But right now, everything else has changed.

"I miss my grandma's cooking," said Ronald. "I'm not very fond of fast foods. I love home cooking—my grandma's home cooking."

The Ballouz brothers said they were hoping that before the summer vacation ended, the nightmare would end so they could go back to school again.



BALLOUZ brothers Ronald Luis (L) Anthony Gorges and Samir Jose (R) who are dual Lebanese-Filipino citizens scan the global map in their home in Buhangin, Davao City after they arrived with the second batch of overseas Filipinos from Lebanon.
BING GONZALES



PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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A PHONE CALL AWAY
A relative of a Filipino worker in Lebanon makes contact with her from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration office in Pasay City. The Owwa has been making free phone calls available to the families of OFWs still in the war-ravaged country in order to assuage their fears. REM ZAMORA

Freed seamen are home

By Volt Contreras

FOR 108 DAYS, THEY WERE served mostly rice, goat meat, and more terror than they could stomach.

This was how Perfecto Narciso, 58, described the ordeal of the 20 Filipino seafarers held hostage on their own ship by armed men in Somalian waters from March 29 to July 15.

He and fellow crew members Julius Nidera, Nelson Gipulla, Meynard Garcia, Ronnie Mendoza and Alex Genanda were the first of the group to make it back to Manila after their release, via a Cathay Pacific flight that landed at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport at around 5:30 p.m. yesterday.

A second flight bringing home three more former captives was expected to arrive at the Naia last night. The Department of Foreign Affairs said the rest of the freed seamen would follow after completing their medical examinations in the United Arab Emirates.

The Filipinos were all working on the M/T Lin 1, a Panamanian-registered vessel owned by the Akron Trade and Transport Company based in Fujairah, UAE. They were recruited in Manila by manning agency J-Phil.

The DFA earlier reported that a representative of Akron, Manoj Sabharwal, acted as the "principal negotiator" for the seamen's release.

Interviewed upon arrival at the Naia, Narciso said he had been traumatized by the experience that "I've almost forgotten my ship's name."

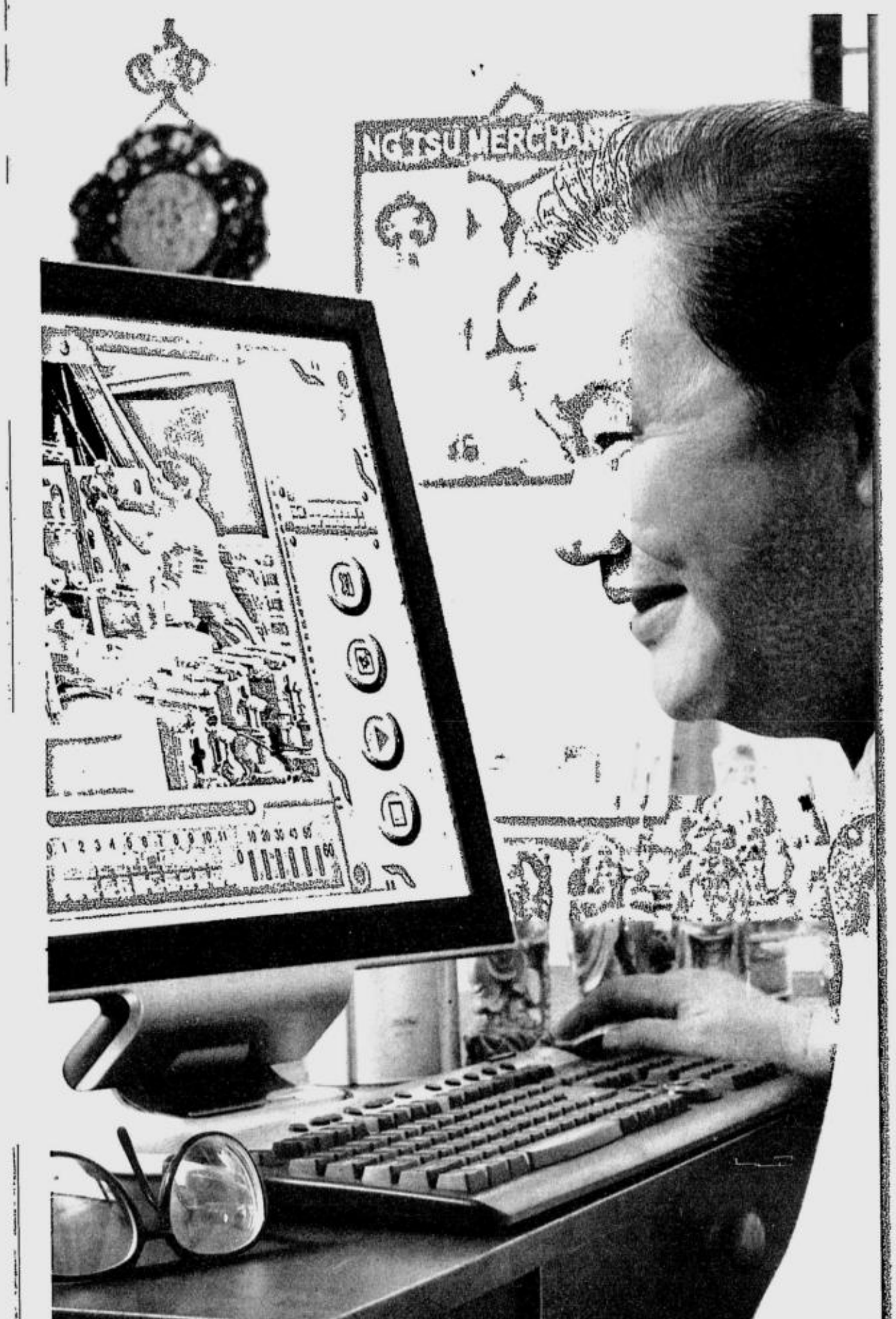
Their captors, he said, never gave any name for their group but always claimed that they had many allies in Somalia.

Narciso, the ship's second engineer, said that none of the Filipinos were physically assaulted while in captivity, but that they were subjected to verbal threats and psychological torture.

"They would often cock their guns in front of us and tell us that they would finish some of us off shortly," said the Pandan, Antique, native.

As many as eight armed men kept watch over the Filipinos at all times, he recalled.

For food, he said, "we were allowed to cook our own meals" on the ship but the fare was always rice and a "live goat" to be slaughtered.



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Different strokes for 'differently abled' folks

Staffed by persons with disabilities, this Mandaluyong office bats for equal opportunities in workplace

JOSE Pepito Manio, one of the staff of the Disabled Persons Affairs Division at the Mandaluyong City Hall, talks about equal job opportunities for the differently abled. PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THIS SMALL DEPARTMENT HAS a big dream: Fight discrimination against persons with disabilities and show others they can still be useful members of society.

The employees of the Disabled Persons Affairs Division in Mandaluyong City know what they are talking about.

Four of them have disabilities themselves, but this has never stopped them from trying to make a difference.

Dennis Balan cannot hear but he can teach deaf children how to read.

Jose Antonio Serapio cannot walk without his crutches but he can fight for the right of disabled persons to have easy access to buildings and streets through the construction of ramps or disabled-friendly facilities.

Jose Pepito Manio has a pair of legs not fully developed to support his body but he can support the dreams of other disabled persons for equal job opportunities.

Oscar Arceo can no longer change the way he walks but he can change the way others look at people with disabilities. He is the division chief.

New name

They prefer to call people like them—the orthopedically handicapped, visually impaired, deaf and mute or with mental disabilities—not as persons with disabilities but as people who are just "differently abled."

The division began as a special project under the office of former mayor and now Commission on

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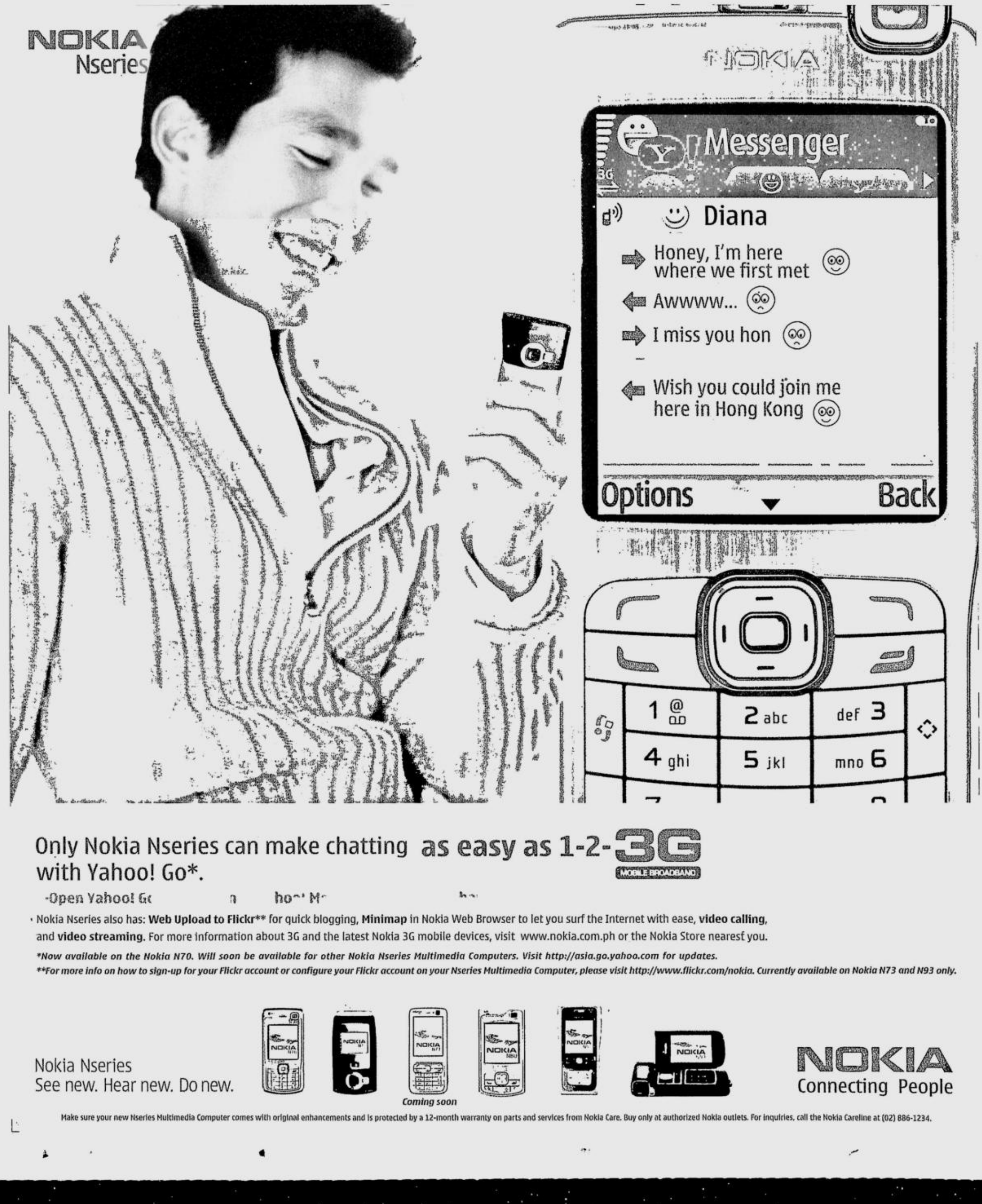

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70,000 HS seniors take UP entrance test

By DJ Yap

IT WAS HARD TO TELL WHO WAS more nervous: the high school seniors taking the entrance exam to the University of the Philippines, or the parents waiting for them at the gates.

One woman spent hours praying the rosary for her daughter to perform well. A man tutored his daughter for several nights using review books borrowed from friends.

A candidate for valedictorian was even willing to trade her medal for a passing grade.

Half of more than 70,000 students flocked to UP campuses and test centers nationwide yesterday to take the UP College Admission Test (UPCAT), the penultimate exam that would decide whether or not they make it to arguably the best university in the country.

The grueling five-hour test covering Mathematics, Science, language proficiency and reading comprehension is administered in two batches (yesterday and today), and divided into morning and afternoon shifts.

Though official figures were not immediately available from the Admissions Office, UP president Emerlinda Roman said this year's batch may be the biggest number of UPCAT examinees ever.

As of the latest count last Friday, the applicants numbered 70,394, according to professor Gerald Franco, assistant director for test administration.

"If there's not much disparity between the number of applications and the actual test takers, then this may be the highest number," Roman said.

"To my recollection, the number of applicants in the last six years just hovers between 64,000 and 66,000," she added.

As early as 5 a.m., many students began gathering around the test centers in clumps. Some of them were chatting with classmates while others were quietly conversing with their parents.

A few were taking last-minute peeks into review booklets and modules.

At a time when tuition rates are rising in many private colleges, the UPCAT represents, for many people, a ticket to excellent but cheap schooling.

THOUSANDS of high school seniors make their way inside Palma Hall to take the University of the Philippines College Admission Test on the Diliman campus yesterday morning. More than 70,000 students are expected to take the test, the most number of applicants ever in the history of the UPCAT. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Life is a balancing act for this award-winning bartender

By DJ Yap

NOBODY CAN ACCUSE MEL ANTHONY Padua of not being able to hold his liquor: In fact, he can manage four—and sometimes five—bottles at a time.

No, the 23-year-old is not your average bum who drinks hard and parties even harder.

He is an up-and-coming bartender who only partakes of alcohol whenever he tastes his personal concoctions or when tossing liquor bottles up in the air for his "flair-tending" routines.

TALES OF THE CITY

Otherwise, "I only take occasional drinks," says Padua, who works for Vanilla Bar and Resto on Sgt. Esguerra, near the corner of Timog Avenue, a favorite nightspot in Quezon City.

Recently, he won the top award in the flair-tending category of a national bartending competition sponsored by Mozart, an Austrian brand of "chocolate cream" (a drink similar to Irish cream).

Flair-tending vs bartending

Flair-tending differs from classical bartending because the bartender can perform acrobatic stunts like juggling bottles while mixing cocktails, he explains.

Padua's win comes with a trip to Chaldiki, Greece, where he will represent the Philippines in a tournament organized by the International Bartenders Association in October.

Very recently, he was also chosen by the Philippine Bartenders League as the country's representative to a regional competition in China scheduled in August, about a week before his stint in Greece.

Since it is his first international competition, Padua is excited over the idea of going to foreign places and carrying the Philippine colors, while also doing something he thoroughly enjoys.

"I never imagined I would be doing this. My ambition was to be the manager of a hotel," says Padua, who holds a degree in hotel and restaurant management from Fatima University.

New career path

Until three years ago, Padua was set on the traditional career path of an HRM graduate, he adds. But when a friend introduced him to bartending, his view of the future began to change.

"I thought, 'Hey, this is great.' So, when I began taking a course on bar management, I also started taking an active interest in becoming a bartender," he says.

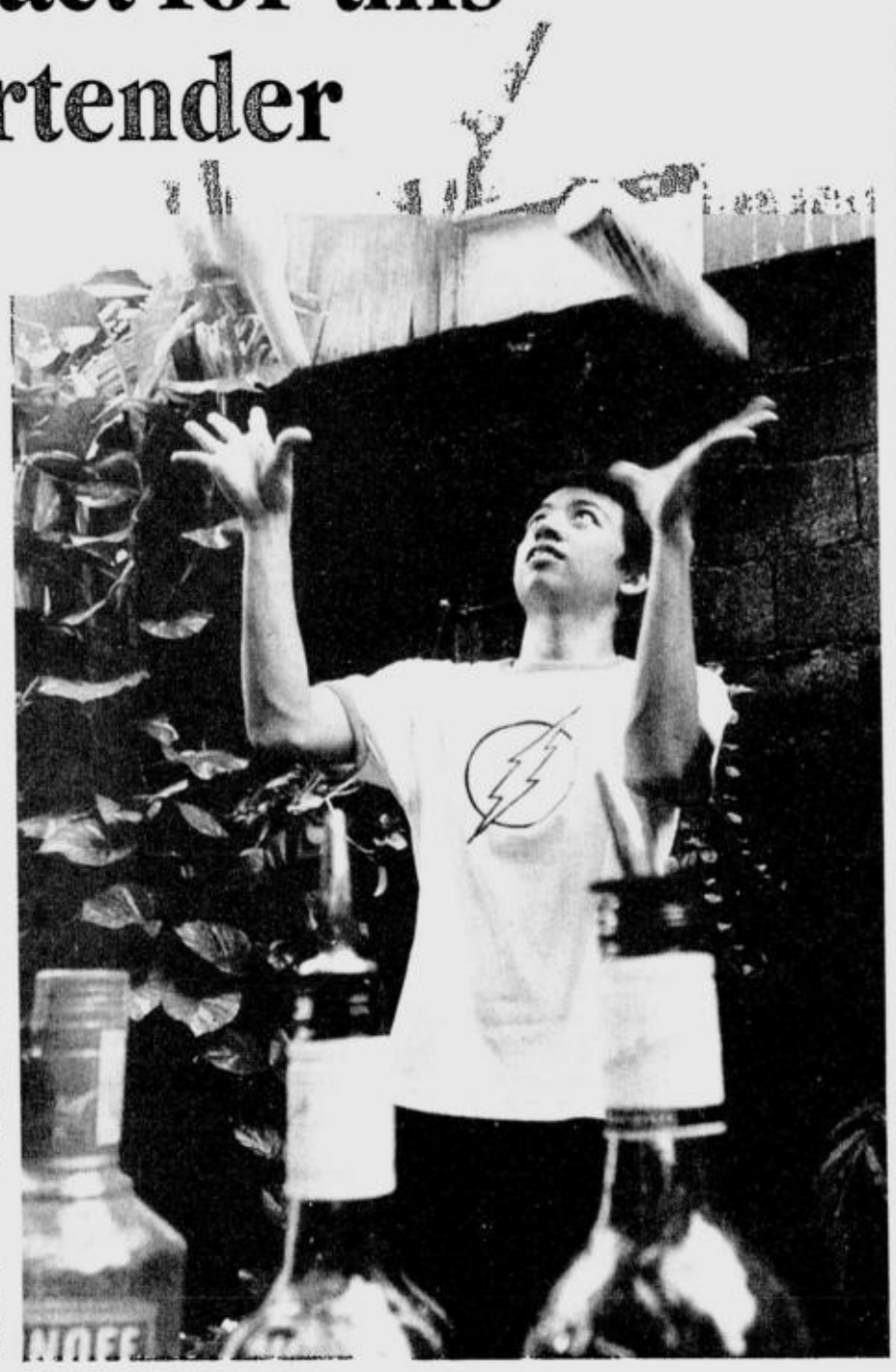
Unlike most bartenders, however, Padua considers juggling liquor bottles and mixing drinks as a career choice, "something I would still be doing many years from now," he adds.

He started out as an amateur bartender in his junior year in college, and turned professional (by joining the Philippine Bartenders League) in 2005, he says.

Opposition from parents

"My parents were against it at first because they had fears that I would cut myself or get accidentally clobbered by the bottles. But they eventually saw that I was enjoying myself," he recalls.

After two years in the circuit, Padua is already a veteran in bartending shows and competitions.



MEL Anthony Padua can juggle three to four bottles at a time. He is now aiming for five. PHOTOS BY JOAN BONDOC

During a competition, the bartender is usually given five minutes to prepare the drinks, all the while wowing the audience with juggling moves and stunts, Padua says.

"Seventy percent of the score is taken from the bartender's 'flair,' or the routine, while 30 percent is from judging the taste," he adds.

For the Mozart competition, he concocted a drink called "Mozaretto," a combination of chocolate cream, Amaretto liquor, pineapple and orange juice and grenadine.

While it usually takes him a week or more to prepare himself for the physical aspect of a competition ("Sometimes, I go to Rizal Park to practice my routine"), it takes him much longer to come up with original recipes for cocktails, he says.

"There has to be balance in the taste, especially in the sweetness or sourness. You have to catch that balance. Then, there also has to be color harmony (in the presentation)," Padua adds.

"The color of the drink must be complemented by the garnish. For instance, in my Mozaretto, the drink was pink, so I garnished it with pineapple," he explains.

Lots of perks

There are also plenty of perks in the bartending profession, Padua says. Sponsors sometimes take him to trips around the country for bartending shows.

One can earn P5,000 in just five minutes of flair-tending, he says. This is on top of his monthly wage from his regular 7 p.m.-2 a.m. job at Vanilla, he adds.

Another advantage of being a bartender is something Padua never expected: The job's appeal with the opposite sex.

"Girls always seem to be fascinated by what bartenders do," he says with a laugh. "Sometimes, my girlfriend and I quarrel about it."

AWARD-WINNING "flair-tender"

METROBRIEFS

Alleged fixer arrested

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) arrested a suspected fixer at the Land Transportation Office (LTO) during an entrapment operation in Quezon City over the weekend. Charged with estafa and usurpation of authority and official function was Danilo Verano, of Bagong Silang, Caloocan City. The NBI said the suspect misrepresented himself as an LTO employee who could facilitate the registration of vehicles. Complainant Proseso Sepulveda, of San Mateo, Rizal, told the NBI that he gave Verano P13,500 for the registration of his Ford Fierra. The suspect, however, demanded more money, prompting Sepulveda to seek the help of the NBI. *Tina G. Santos*

Alay Lakad's new board

THE ALAY-LAKAD Foundation, Inc., recently elected members of the ALFI Board of Trustees for a term of two years (2005-2007). Elected trustees were Philippine National Police chief Oscar Calderon; Boy Scouts of the Philippines national president Jejomar Binay; National Youth Commission chair Richard Alvin Nalupta; Dr. Roberto Dante Corros, Roxas City chapter; Vic Reyes, Batangas City chapter; and individual members Gen. Francisco Atayde and Dr. Teruko Haga. They will join Frank Evaristo, president; Lina Laigo, vice president; Undersecretary Celia Yangco, treasurer; YMCA Manila president Judge Tingaraan Guiling, assistant treasurer; Joe Redoblado; corporate secretary; Rotary International District 3810 governor Lyne Abanilla; Education Secretary Jesli Lapus; Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno; Girl Scouts of the Philippines national president Teresita Choa; GMMG-OP Secretary Cerge Remonde; MMDA chair Bayani Fernando; YWCA national president Florida Jose; Kiwanis governor Ildefonso Cariño; Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral; Armed Forces chief Hermogenes Esperon; Philippine Information Agency director general Conrado Limcaoco; Lions governor Jacinto Yu and Philippine Jaycees national president Ismael Penado.

READING IS FUN
Beauty queens Bb. Pilipinas International Denille Valmonte (left) and Bb. Pilipinas World Ana Marie Igpit urge schoolchildren to make reading a habit during a book fair held at the Aurora Tower in Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Different strokes for 'differently abled' folks

From page A17

Elections chair Benjamin Abalos Sr.

Thanks to the lobbying of a group of about 200 differently abled persons—the Samahan ng may Kapansanan sa Mandaluyong which Manio heads—Abalos created the division in 1997.

Knowing that heads of local governments come and go—and so do the projects they begin—the same group also asked the city council to institutionalize the special project.

First in the country

Through an ordinance approved in October 1998, the Disabled Persons Affairs Division was born, possibly the first in the country, according to Manio.

"The Social Welfare and Development office handles many sectors. We thought that a separate office could focus more on the rights and welfare of the differently abled," Manio said.

Manio fell off a see-saw when he was in grade school in Manila. His classmate, who was at the other end of the see-saw, suddenly jumped off his seat to pull off a prank, but the impact stunted the development of Manio's legs, leaving them unable to support his upper body.

He stopped going to school after the accident. His father left them when he was still young, and though his mother showered him with all the help he needed, he knew he could not go to school by himself without any help.

"But I never wanted to grow up dumb," Manio said.

Home-schooling

Taking inspiration from the books his sisters gave him about people with disabilities who became successful, like Apolinario Mabini, he continued his education at home.

To get around, Manio rides on three specially designed bikes—the smallest bike he uses inside his home, another is for formal functions, while a red one—which he uses daily—is his favorite mode of transport.

He said he would usually hear children asking their parents what an old man was doing on a small bike. This always makes him laugh.

OSCAR Arceo heads the division. PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

"It is a matter of acceptance. If you cannot accept your disabilities, life will really be difficult for you," Manio said, sitting on his red bike which he personally designed. The bike has no pedals; he uses his feet to move himself.

But he knows his story is more of the exception rather than the rule. Out there, differently abled persons still suffer not only from discrimination but also from self-pity and their own feeling of uselessness.

JOSE Antonio Serapio, another staffer.

The discrimination persists even in matters of the heart. Arceo, who fell off a steep ladder in school when he was six, crushing his right ankle, knew how it was to be teased as he limped through his childhood.

"*Pilantod* (Cripple!)," people would tease him when he was a young man and was courting a woman who worked in the same textile company where he worked.

The incident left him heartbroken. When his parents introduced him to another woman in Laguna, he concluded she would never like him because of his disability. He was glad to be proven wrong when he met Lydia whom he married on June 14, 1973.

Working for others

Fueled by their experiences, Arceo and Manio have been organizing activities for the 1,438 (based on a survey as of February 2005) differently abled persons in Mandaluyong City. With the help of a private company, the division holds computer literacy, photography and even photocopying machine operation seminars.

Despite their efforts, both know that the fight for differently abled people is far from over. Still, they are willing to walk the extra mile to ensure that someday, they will be given the same opportunities just like anybody else.

GLOBAL Pinoy

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Text us your feedback:
Inquirer gp name/age/city/message
to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Filipinos overseas toiling on land and at sea, in factories, in construction sites and in the homes of the world, and wherever work can be contracted to secure a better life for their families. These are their stories.

■ **Out of Lebanon** but can hardly wait to return to the postcard-pretty country /A20

■ **OFW's favorite business,** the sari-sari store, and how to succeed in it /A20

WHAT'S INSIDE

Nokia introduces the Nokia N91 for a true mobile music experience

Storage for up to 3000 songs, plus smartphone functionality in an ultra-portable package

Manila, Philippines - Nokia recently introduced the Nokia N91 multimedia, the company's latest device optimized for mobile music consumption. With room for up to 3000 songs on the integrated 4-gigabyte hard disk, the Nokia N91 delivers a premier music experience.

In addition, the industry standard 3.5mm stereo headset jack and easy transfer of music files from your PC help make the Nokia N91 a connected mobile jukebox. Encased in stainless steel, the Nokia N91 has dedicated music keys on its face, which slide down to reveal the phone keypad. The Nokia N91 is a part of the new Nokia Nseries range, bringing you the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities. "The Nokia N91 delivers both a fantastic music experience and cutting-edge phone features," said Parikshit Bhasin, Country General Manager, Nokia Philippines. "What sets the Nokia N91 apart is the fact that it is always connected - you can download new music while on the move, add it to your favorite playlist and then share your playlist with friends. It's truly the world's best mobile connected jukebox."

Listen to Music

The Nokia N91 serves up to 12.5 hours of great sound via the included stereo headset with remote control. Enjoying your music collection has never been easier, as the Nokia N91 supports a wide range of digital music formats including MP3, M4A, AAC and WMA.

Nokia N91 is compatible with a number of accessories from industry leading brands Bose(R), Harman Kardon(r), JBL(r), and Sennheiser. In addition to using their favorite audio accessories with the Nokia N91 through its standard 3.5mm jack, consumers can maximize their audio experience by choosing products from a line-up of Nokia tested and recommended audio accessories*.

Get Music

Packed with multiple connectivity options, such as WCDMA, WLAN and Bluetooth wireless technology, the Nokia N91 makes it easy for you to find and enjoy music when and where you want. With the Nokia N91, you can quickly and easily find and purchase music over the air to your device from your operator's music store.

Manage Music

Drag and drop your personal music collection from your PC to your Nokia N91 or synchronize your recent music purchases with your PC via USB 2.0. You can also create and manage your playlists directly on your Nokia N91, or shuffle songs around to build your optimal listening experience.

Share Music

A revolutionary feature of the Nokia N91 is the possibility to share your playlists with friends by multimedia message, email or Bluetooth. Proudly show off your musical taste or simply share the latest songs that have been stuck in your head. The Nokia N91 also contains the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities, including a 2 megapixel camera for print-quality photos, email support, a full web browser and video sharing.

*The Nokia tested and recommended industry leading accessories for Nokia N91 include:

Sennheiser PX 100, 200, PMX 40, and PMX 60 mini headphones, PXC 150, 250, and 300 NoiseGard(TM) active noise-cancelling mini headphones and the HD465, 485, 515, 555, 595 audiophile headphones, JBL Duet(TM), OnTour(TM), Creature II(r), and Encounter(TM) speaker systems, Harman Kardon Soundsticks II(r) speaker system, Bose QuietComfort (r) 2 Acoustic Noise Canceling headphones and TriPort headphones

About Nokia Nseries

Nokia Nseries is a range of high performance multimedia devices that delivers unparalleled mobile multimedia experiences by combining the latest technologies with stylish design and ease of use. With Nokia Nseries products, consumers can use a single device to enjoy entertainment, access information and to capture and share pictures and videos, whenever and wherever they want.

About Nokia

Nokia is a world leader in mobile communications, driving the growth and sustainability of the broader mobility industry. Nokia connects people to each other and the information that matters to them with easy-to-use and innovative products like mobile phones, devices and solutions for imaging, games, media and businesses. Nokia provides equipment, solutions and services for network operators and corporations.

You may visit the Nokia Philippines website at http://www.nokia.com.ph

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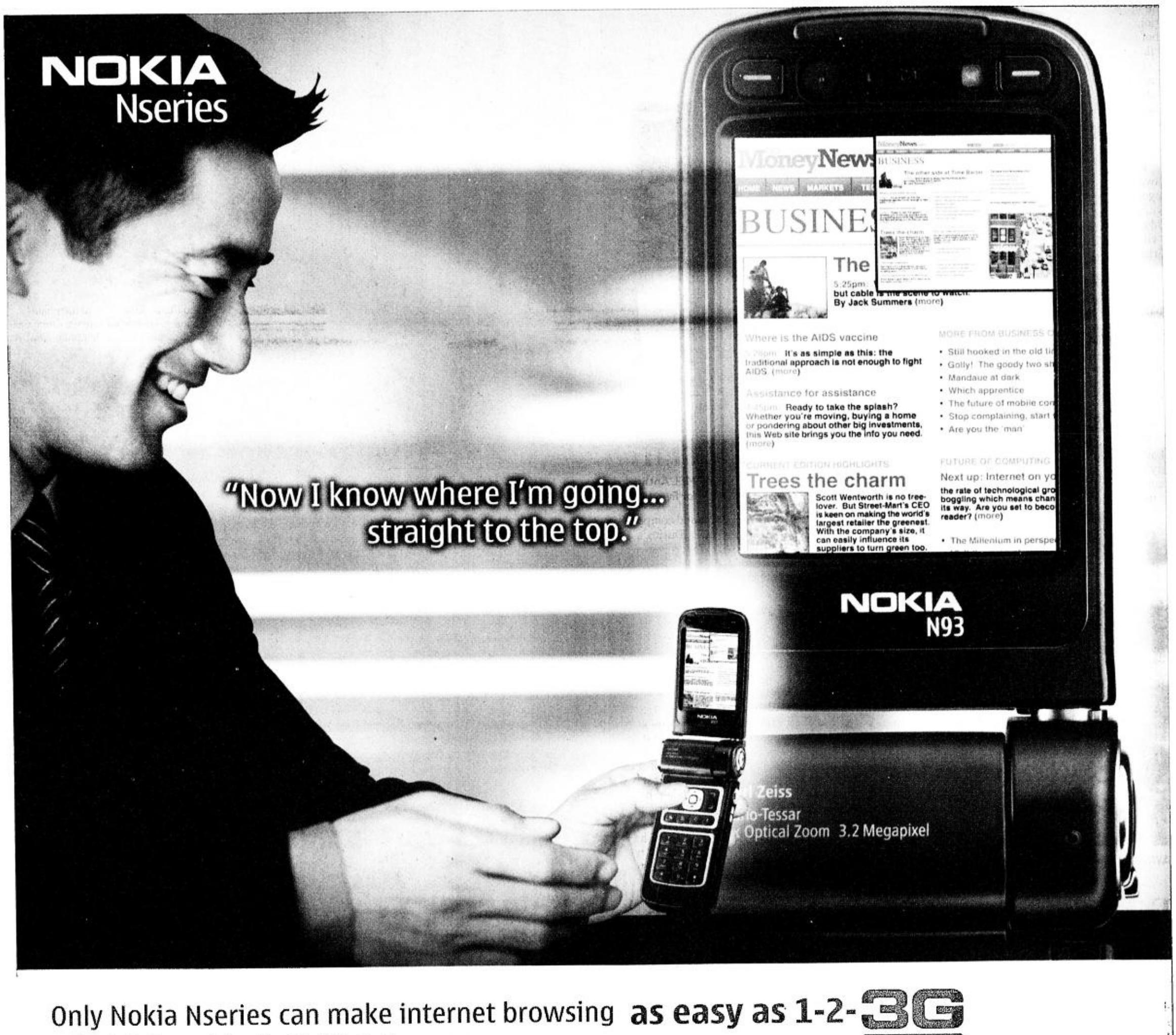

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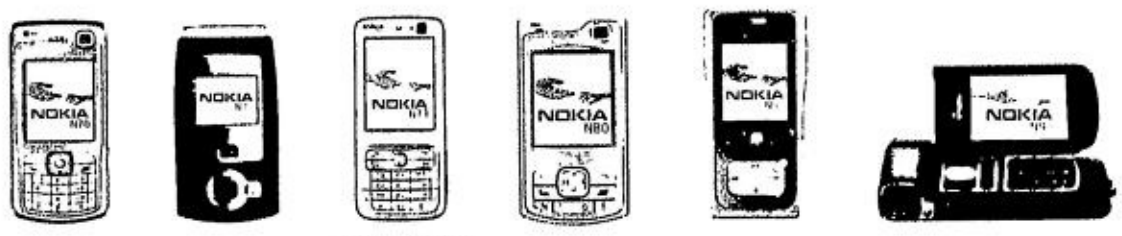
The **Minimap feature is currently available on Nokia N71, N73, N80, N91 and N93. **Flickr** is currently available on Nokia N73 and N93. **Yahoo! Go** is now available on Nokia N70 and will soon be available for other Nokia Nseries Multimedia Computers.*



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Out of Lebanon but can hardly wait to get back

By Kenneth M. Del Rosario
Contributor

ADELAIDA "BABY" RIVERA, 43, A CARETAKER and domestic helper in Lebanon for the past 11 years, feels she is one of the most "lucky and blessed" Filipino workers in the Muslim country. Despite encountering difficulties along the way and the ongoing war that's tearing her second home apart, a postcard pretty Lebanon remains on her mind.

Baby, who is here for a vacation, recalls a Lebanon so beautiful it defies any of today's news stories which puts the country's name in the same breath as "bombings" and "missiles."

Instant tourist spots

"Lebanon is one beautiful place!" Baby tells the INQUIRER in an interview, adding that the country's natural scenic views make ordinary places instant tourist spots. Over a decade of stay in Lebanon, Baby, during her days off was able to visit several legendary churches, trek giant mountains, sail and swim in its majestic rivers, and ski in the country's winter snow.

Baby, whose labors are dedicated to her two children, first came to work in Jounieh, Lebanon in 1995, together with a fellow Filipino friend. "My family needed the money and working abroad was the best option then," Baby says, adding that she felt she had to take a risk for her family's future.

Jounieh is north of the Lebanese capital Beirut.

She also mentions the delicious fruits, vegetables, and meat and how fresh everything is. Aside from that, most Lebanese, Baby says, are very kind and friendly as well. "Many of the Lebanese I know would greet me whenever we chance upon each other in the streets," she says.

Being then an open city, Baby took advantage of the city's rich night life. "When we have time, my friends and I would dine out in some Filipino restaurant to talk and update each other with the latest news from our loved ones at home," Baby remarks, saying that singing their hearts out in the videoke houses there is one of their favorite pastimes.

Not all smiles

As fun and exciting as her rest days must have been during her stay in Lebanon, her life there was definitely not all smiles, Baby says. For a full two years when she first arrived, she worked for a Lebanese who would not let her out of the house and even use the telephone, so the only way to communicate with loved ones at home was by writing letters. Still, the work was much better than her previous jobs as waitress and house caretaker back in the early '90s here in the Philippines.

After fulfilling the contract with her first employer, she worked as chambermaid and general cleaner in several hotels and private homes between September 1997 and December 1998. She came home for her first vacation after three years of absence.

"I wasn't able to go home with the big *balikbayan* boxes a typical OFW goes home with," Baby quips. "That's because all of my earnings I send home regularly for my children so there was only little I could spend on *pasalubongs*."

Back to work

In October 1999, after spending several months with her family, Baby decided once more to fly to Lebanon. This time around, however, work did not come easily. She had to struggle for the first few months as if it was her first time.

CARETAKING her employer Rosa Hicante, in a restaurant in Nakoura, Lebanon; 2005.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Unable to look for a permanent job, she stayed with her Filipino friends. Since her return to Lebanon until April of 2004, Baby was not able to secure a stable job and only worked part-time in health centers and baby dress factories, among others. "There is always the feeling of dread knowing that my children are depending on me and I still don't have a (stable) job," Baby remarks, adding that her lack of proper papers and travel documents made it much harder to look for a job.

In prison

To make matters worse, she and several other Filipino workers were arrested and detained in Tripole for charges of working with no appropriate credentials. For five months, she survived the bleak Lebanese prison with the help of fellow Filipino friends who would visit and bring them food once in a while.

Fortunately for Baby, she made good friends with a Lebanese-Turkish woman whom she met in one of her temporary jobs. To her surprise, this woman, after learning what happened to Baby, visited her in jail. It is this friend, whom Baby is eternally grateful, who got her out of jail and took her under her care.

Extra income

From the time she went out of jail in September 2004 until March 2006, when she went home to the Philippines for the first time in seven long years (this time with several *balikbayan* boxes), she worked as household help and caretaker of her friend's older sister in Nakoura, Lebanon. While looking after her charge, she also helped with her friend's chandelier business which provided her with extra income.

Also, during her stay in Nakoura, Baby was finally able to get the legal papers she needed to be able to come back and work from Lebanon to the Philippines.

LUSH foliage is part of the Lebanese landscape. Baby in 1998 on her way to Saint Charbel Church.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Blessed, faithful

"I believe it is my faith in God which helped me pull through the difficulties in my life," Baby says of her safe return to the Philippines. She is thankful that, unlike many Filipino workers abroad today, she was able to get good employers who paid her a just salary.

She also appeals to her fellow OFWs around the world, not to forget the purpose why they are working abroad. "In my experience, there are people who tend to forget why they are working in Lebanon," she remarks, referring to several Filipino workers who, after a while, put their personal luxuries over their family's needs at home.

Though sometimes she feels lonely for not being able to raise her kids personally, she knows that someday her children would understand the sacrifices she has had to make and respect her for it.

Back to Lebanon

Now happy and contented with her family in Alaminos, Laguna, she spends most of her time at home, savoring every moment with her loved ones as she is ready to leave for Lebanon again as soon as the government lifts the ban for Filipinos to work there.

In her mind, the good memories of Lebanon are evergreen—the fresh, pollution-free air and the scenic views of the towering mountains, which she could not wait to come back to and would soon experience once more.

She cannot wait to return to the refreshing pollution-free atmosphere of the scenic views of towering mountains, to the country of her affections.

But when this is all over, will there be a Lebanon to return to?

RICH NIGHT LIFE: Baby (at right) celebrates her friend's birthday in a disco house in 1998. Singing in videoke houses was a favorite pastime.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

How to succeed in the sari-sari store business

By Francisco J. Colayco
Contributor

ANOTHER FAVORITE BUSINESS of OFWs and their families is the sari-sari store where the capital required is very low. For just about any amount, and a property that opens up to a street or pathway that is frequented by people, one can open a sari-sari store. In fact, many stores are just a small room in their house with a barred window that opens out to the street.

Because of the numerous sari-sari stores located beside each other, it seems unbelievable that any of them make money. In fact, a few make money but others end up just selling their inventory to get back their cash. Some just use up their inventory for their personal needs so that these do not rot. Many don't even know if they make money or not. They just don't seem to be running our of cash for their business so everything must be okay.

3 most important factors

The required inventory capital can range from P10,000 and more. There may be costs for permits and fees for the barangay depending on the practice in your area plus of course any renovation you may need to convert your place into a store.

A successful owner said that if you want significant earnings, no less than P50,000 inventory capital is needed. Examining the margins that storeowners add, it seems that 20 percent is a good average. Assuming you can turnover your inventory at least twice in one month, then you can have a gross profit anywhere from P2,000 to P10,000 per month. You can add to your inventory as you become more successful.

To compute your net profit, remember to deduct your allowance for your storekeeper or "bantay," your transportation costs to purchase your inventory and your electricity, if you have a refrigerator/freezer.

It seems that the three most important factors for success in a sari-sari store are pricing, customer relations and inventory control to make sure that your earnings are not fictitious.

Pricing

All sari-sari owners say that they check out the competition in their area to determine their selling price.

If they are all checking each other out, it must be the oldest store in the area that sets the benchmark then. However, each owner does not necessarily follow the benchmark. Each has a reason to sell higher or lower than the benchmark. For example, some owners have a source where they are able to purchase at a much lower price than regular wholesalers and supermarkets. Others believe that they can price higher because they have a better location or better service. However, I doubt that this will be good long-term strategy as purchasing power worsens with the cost of oil and gasoline going up. People will walk the extra mile to get the best value for their money.

Customer relations

Nobody likes dealing with a grouch. Foreigners always say that Filipinos are happy and smiley people. Let's be happy and smiley to our co-Filipinos too, not only to the foreigners.

It is always good to be in touch with the needs of your customers. If you know what else they would buy that you don't yet have available and at what price, tell them that you will make sure you have it on the date you are sure you will have it. Don't make promises you won't keep.

Inventory control

Very few do this as they consider it a waste of time considering the many items in small quantities. However, it is just a matter of setting up the system and everything else can be done automatically.

The owner has to set a day for inventory of all items to be sold. For each item in the store, have a stock card (can be a piece of paper). The stack card has columns for date purchased, number of units, price/unit, total price, date sold, number of units, selling price/unit, total price and balance number of units.

The owner makes the stock cards for each item giving the correct description for eacy alphabetically according to items filing and fills up the date purchased, number of units, price/unit and total price.

The cards are filed alphabetically in a box for easy retrieving. Each time an item is sold, the "bantay" picks up the correct card, fills up the date sold, number of units, selling price/unit and sets aside the stock cards that he/she filled out during the day.

At the end of the day, the owner then checks the stock cards that had a sale and fills out the total price and balance number of units columns. All the stock cards are then returned to the same box alphabetically together for the next day.

Once a week or at least once a month, the owner has to make a total inventory to make sure that the balance number of units column for each item matches, this way, the owner knows his /her profits plus keeps the "bantay" honest.

Here are a few more tips:

- Have a good "bantay" you can trust, preferably one who can read your alphabetically arranged stock cards and can write the date and number of units sold. The "bantay" should understand the system and know that he/she will be checked. This should help in reducing the temptation to be lax or to give away products.
- Make sure you do the checks, other wise your system was a total waste of time. If you or your child is computer literate, this system can easily be done on your computer.
- Canvass where purchase costs are cheapest and plan your trips to reduce transportation costs. Some suppliers particularly those with unbranded products, are willing to deliver. Look for them.
- If you have a refrigerator or freezer, sell refrigerated items at a premium over the regular items to cover the electricity costs.
- Try not to sell on credit but if you do, add a premium and set a credit limit per customer depending on how well you know him/her. Collect within a week. Stop all sales if not paid on time.

Norway scrambles to save Sri Lanka from full-scale war

COLOMBO—NORWAY LAUNCHED high-level talks Friday in a bid to pull Sri Lanka back from all-out war as thousands of Muslims fled the bloodiest fighting in four years that has claimed nearly 170 lives.

Peace broker Oslo sent special envoy Jon Hanssen-Bauer who immediately went in for talks with Prime Minister Ratnasiri Wickremenayake and Foreign Minister Mangala Samaraweera, officials said.

Details of the discussions were not immediately known but diplomats close to the peace process said the thrust of the discussions was to save the collapsing ceasefire which Oslo arranged and put in place in February 2002.

"The latest talks have become critically important for Sri Lanka," a diplomat said. "The peace process is facing its biggest ever challenge." Hanssen-Bauer was due to travel to the rebel-held town of Kilinochchi on Saturday and spend a few days talking with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) leadership about salvaging what is left of the 2002 truce.

"The envoy will spend the weekend in Kilinochchi talking to the LTTE leadership," said LTTE spokesperson Velayadun Dayani. "He will talk about the peace process and the war-like situation." International concern was led by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan who called for an immediate halt to the latest battles, which erupted 10 days ago when the Tigers cut off a canal in northeastern Trincomalee district supplying water to thousands of families.

The violence has raised fears of an all-out return to civil war on the island, where an often-broken ceasefire has tried to keep a lid on a Tamil insurgency that has left some 60,000 people dead in the past three decades.

Relief workers said families were using any transport they could find to get out of the mainly-Muslim town of Muttur near Trincomalee, which on Wednesday became the latest flashpoint in the battle that has claimed 169 lives by official count. *AFP*

ME AND MY SWEETHEART
Shooting Star 4-H Club member Lindsey Kieser, 9, of rural Bloomington pets Sweetheart, her white Wyandotte chicken, during the McLean County Fair in Bloomington, Ill., Aug. 4. AP

1st sentence in Argentina's 'Dirty War' slapped on cop

BUENOS AIRES—FORMER POlice officer Julio Simon was sentenced Friday to 25 years in prison in the disappearance of a couple and the abduction of their baby during the 1976-1983 dictatorship, the first such sentence in Argentina.

Simon was sentenced for the kidnapping of Gertrudis Hlaczik and her handicapped Chilean husband, Jose Poblete, who disappeared from state custody and are assumed to have been murdered during Argentina's 'Dirty War' period. He was also sentenced for the abduction of their daughter, Claudia, eight months of age, on Nov. 28, 1978.

Victims' relatives and representatives of human rights groups present in courtroom broke out in applause as the sentence was read.

The first such sentence since amnesty laws were overturned in 2003 found the former police officer "criminally responsible for illegal deprivations of freedoms aggravated by its repetition, forcible suffering to the politically persecuted and the abduction of a child."

Argentina's Supreme Court in 2005 ruled unconstitutional a blanket amnesty that benefited about 1,000 military staff accused of state terrorism during Argentina's last dictatorship in the case of Poblete and Hlaczik.

Their daughter Claudia, 22 years later, discovered her identity and Simon was charged, but could not be convicted because of the amnesty law, until last year's Supreme Court decision.

Two high-ranking officials had already been jailed in the kidnappings of some 500 children of dissidents, a crime not covered in the amnesty: Former general Jorge Videla and former admiral Emilio Massera, who are both in ill health.

The 2005 Supreme Court decision breathed life into survivors' cases against the military, which ruthlessly clamped down on opponents and their children, engaging in torture and leaving some 30,000 people missing and presumed dead, rights groups say.

The decision allowed courts to subpoena dozens in the military, active or retired, who are suspected of having tortured prisoners. Many were allegedly tortured in the presence of their loved ones, siblings or children.

The two amnesty laws were decreed in 1986 and 1987, under Radical Party president Raul Alfonsin. One law granted enlisted men and officers protection from prosecution if they claimed that they had merely followed orders in committing abuses. The other law granted an amnesty outright to the commanders who gave the orders. *AFP*

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

THE WORLD

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Israeli bombings kill 40 civilians in Lebanon

BEIRUT—ISRAELI BOMBS KILLED AT LEAST 40 civilians in south Lebanon and Hezbollah launched its longest-range rocket attack of the war as world powers inched closer to a deal at the United Nations to end the fighting.

The main division on a draft UN Security Council resolution is between France and the United States. Paris wants existing UN peacekeepers and Lebanon's army to monitor a truce, while Washington wants the Israeli army to stay in southern Lebanon until an international force arrives.

France's UN ambassador said after talks with the United States on Friday: "We're still working on it." US ambassador John Bolton said: "There are still some issues that we have not resolved, but I think we have come a little bit closer."

Officials say an agreement could come over the weekend, then a Security Council vote could be held within 24 hours. But as the war entered its 25th day, it is not clear if the protagonists would heed a UN call for an end to hostilities.

Israel's ambassador to the United States said his country would only agree to an end to fighting if Hezbollah released the two Israeli soldiers whose July 12 capture sparked the conflict.

Israel's immediate goal is "the unconditional release of the two hostages ... which would constitute the end of hostilities," Ambassador Daniel Ayal told Reuters.

US Assistant Secretary of State David Welch is to visit Beirut on Saturday for talks with Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora, Lebanese political sources said.

Underscoring the need for a peace deal, was another day of violence on Friday that, like previous days, killed more civilians than combatants.

One Israeli air strike killed 33 farm workers loading plums and peaches onto trucks and wounded another 20 near Qaa, in the Bekaa Valley close to the Syrian border.

"I was picking peaches when three bombs hit. Others were having lunch and they were torn to pieces," said Mohammad Rashed, one of the wounded. Syria's official news agency said 17 of the dead were Syrian migrant workers, five of them women.

Hezbollah's response was not long in coming. Several rockets landed in or near the Israeli city of Hadera, some 80 kilometers from the border—the deepest rocket attack so far. *Reuters*

AN ISRAELI fighter plane drops flares before dropping bombs east of the port city of Tyre, southern Lebanon, Aug. 4. AP

A LEBANESE woman reacts at the destruction after she came to inspect her house in the suburbs of Beirut, Lebanon, Aug. 5, after Israeli warplanes repeatedly bombed the area overnight. Israeli commandos attacked near the southern city of Tyre early Saturday but were repelled by Hezbollah guerrillas who killed an Israeli member of the force and wounded others, the group said in a statement. AP

Cuba prepares self for possible US attack

HAVANA—CUBA IS TAKING THE threat of a possible US invasion during Fidel Castro's health crisis seriously, even as the White House insists such a threat does not exist.

The island's government, currently under the control of Defense Minister Raul Castro, mobilized citizen defense militias and asked military reservists to check in daily.

Cubans interviewed on state-run media Friday said they would fight to the death any invaders from the north, while the Communist Party daily Granma said, "We Cubans are prepared for the defense" of the island.

Yet White House press secretary Tony Snow rejected as "absurd" any suggestion that the United States would militarily attack the island.

"The US has absolutely no designs on invading Cuba," Snow said in Crawford, Texas, where US President George W. Bush is vacationing at his ranch. "Cubans are going to have to chart their destiny. It's the one thing that they've been deprived during the dictatorship of Fidel Castro."

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice also made a statement Friday, imploring Cubans not to flee to Florida. Her message was being transmitted over US government radio and television stations that are beamed to the island but have limited audiences because of Cuban jamming operations. The message was also picked up on CNN and other major media, where some Cubans were more likely to see it.

Neither Castro brother has been seen since the Monday announcement that Fidel, 79, had undergone surgery and was temporarily ceding power to his brother Raul, who is 75. No new details were provided on Castro's condition following the surgery for intestinal bleeding.

Snow said everyone at the White House was "very interested" in Castro's condition as well as his brother's whereabouts. "It tells you something about a government that seems to be in hiding at a point like this," he said.

Cuban Cabinet ministers said Castro was doing well and urged patience.

In Guatemala, Cuban Health Minister Jose Ramon Balaguer told Radio Sonora that Castro "underwent surgery from which he is recovering satisfactorily." Balaguer is a longtime Communist Party leader and physician named by Castro to watch over his pet health projects in his absence. *AP*

2 arrested in Phoenix 'serial shooter' killings

PHOENIX—POLICE SAID THAT two men captured at an apartment complex are responsible for a string of random late-night killings that have terrorized residents across this sprawling city for months.

Dale S. Hausner and Samuel John Dieteman were arrested Friday at their apartment in suburban Mesa after about a week of police surveillance.

A concerned citizen told detectives that Dieteman would drive through the Phoenix area, selecting random targets, according to a probable cause statement released Friday night. It was only later that police connected Hausner to Dieteman.

The report shows that detectives found a .410-gauge shotgun, residue and ammunition in the suspects' possession.

While police were monitoring Hausner and Dieteman, they watched as the two "suspiciously drove through the areas of prior attacks and slowing in the areas of vagrant activity," according to the report. They also saw one of the men throw a trash bag into a bin at the apartment complex.

Inside the bag was a map with red and blue dots representing attack locations, one expended .410-gauge shotgun shell and a piece of paper referring to serial violence, the report shows.

Police also found other guns and long rifles and news clippings about the killings.

The report also shows that Hausner and Dieteman took turns driving and shooting, and said Dieteman admitted to many of the shootings.

"We have a great deal of evidence from a variety of sources in this case and that's the reason that we are so confident that these are the people," Harris said.

The attacks, which began in May 2005, left six dead and were all the more frightening because another, apparently unrelated serial killer has been preying on Phoenix-area victims at the same time.

"These are the two monsters we have been hunting, and I promise you and our colleagues promise you, we are not finished," Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon said during a news conference Friday.

Hausner, 33, and Dieteman, 30, were arrested late Thursday in an apartment where neighbors said both men lived. *AP*

Bolivia set to rewrite constitution

SUCRE, BOLIVIA—PRESIDENT EVO Morales' drive to reinvent Bolivia takes a big step Sunday with the opening of a convention to write a new constitution aimed at ending the centuries-old supremacy of the European-descended minority.

Morales, a leftist elected in December as Bolivia's first Indian president, envisions the nationally elected Constituent Assembly, which has up to a year to rewrite the constitution, as nothing less than the "refounding" of the country on a new deal for the Indian majority.

The divisions of class, race, geography and culture that will frame the debate were brought into sharp relief Thursday night as the 255 delegates elected last month were sworn in.

On one side of the narrow aisle sat the delegates from Morales' leftist party, many wearing the fluorescent-colored knit caps of the Aymara Indians or the bowlers and white straw hats favored by rural women.

On the conservative benches, the skin tone was visibly paler, and business suits dominated.

At one point the conservatives, many from eastern provinces that want to keep more of their wealth from being consumed by socialist programs, stood up chanting "Autonomy!"

Morales' loyalists responded with "Revolution!"

After pleas for order, both sides settled down and sang the national anthem. *AP*

9/11 panel thought Pentagon was lying to probers

WASHINGTON—THE SEPT. 11 COMMISSION was so frustrated with repeated misstatements by the Defense Department and Federal Aviation Agency about their response to the 2001 terror attacks that it considered an investigation into possible deception, the panel's chairs say in a new book.

Republican Thomas Kean and Democrat Lee Hamilton also say in "Without Precedent" that their panel was too soft in questioning former New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani—and that the 20-month investigation may have suffered for it.

The book, a behind-the-scenes look at the investigation, recounts obstacles the authors say were thrown up by the Bush administration, internal disputes over President George W. Bush's use of the attacks as a reason for invading Iraq, and the way the final report avoided questioning whether US policy in the Middle East may have contributed to the attacks.

Kean and Hamilton said the commission found it mind-boggling that authorities had asserted during hearings that their air defenses had reacted quickly and were prepared to shoot down United Airlines Flight 93, which appeared headed toward Washington.

In fact, the commission determined—after it subpoenaed audiotapes and e-mails of the sequence of events—that the shootdown order did not reach North American Aerospace Command pilots until after all of the hijacked planes had crashed.

The book states that commission staff, "exceedingly frustrated" by what they thought could be deception, proposed a full review into why the FAA and the Pentagon's NORAD had presented inaccurate information. That ultimately could have led to sanctions. *AP*

6 US Marines charged with assaulting Iraq civilians

WASHINGTON—SIX MARINES HAVE been charged with assaulting Iraqi civilians following an investigation that grew out of the alleged murder of an Iraqi civilian, the Marine Corps said Friday.

Charge sheets said they struck Khalid Hamad Daham with closed fists and knees in the head, face and torso "with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm" on April 10 in the town of Hamandia, west of Baghdad.

Sergeant Lawrence Hutchins, one of the marines, also was alleged to have stuck a loaded pistol in the mouth of a second Iraqi, Ali Haraj Rbashby.

Hutchins choked both Rbashby and a third Iraqi, Hassam Hamza Fayall, "with a force likely to cause death or grievous bodily harm," according to the charge sheets.

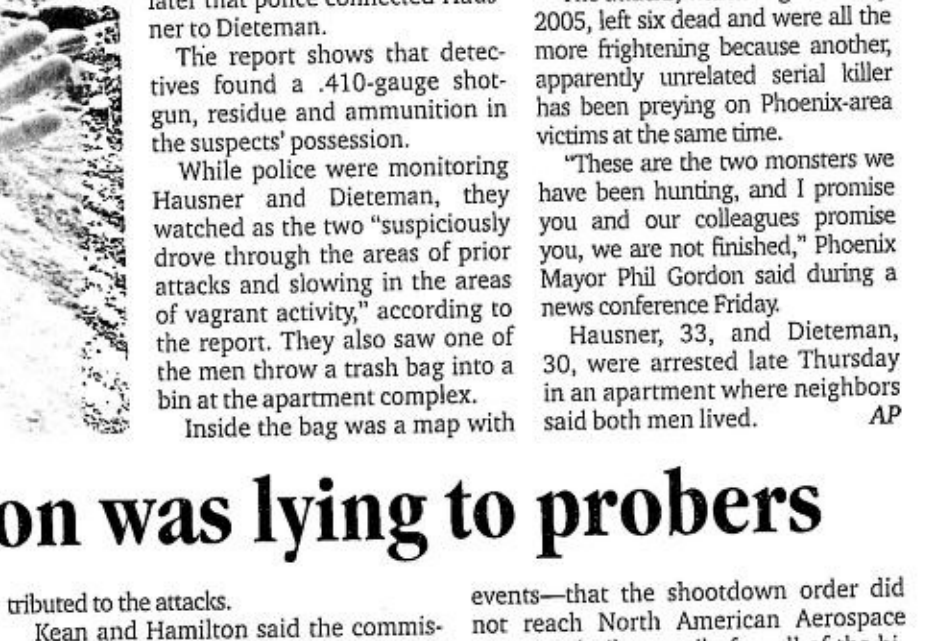
Three of the marines, including Hutchins, already faced charges of murder, kidnapping and conspiracy in a separate incident on April 26.

In that incident, marines are alleged to have dragged an Iraqi from his home in Hamandia and shot him to death with a stolen AK-47 assault rifle.

In both cases, the marines were members of the same platoon of Kilo Company, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment of the 1st Marine Division, said Lieutenant Colonel Sean Gibson, a marine spokesperson.

Gibson said the April 10 incident came to light in the course of investigating the April 26 incident, which led to murder, kidnapping and conspiracy charges against seven marines and a navy corpsman.

"Marine leadership became aware of the alleged assaults in early May 2006 during a criminal investigation into an unrelated incident," the Marine Corps said in a statement, referring to the April 26 incident. *AFP*



ANYTHING FOR A PAYCHECK
Child laborers arrange bricks inside a brick factory in the northern Indian city of Allahabad Aug. 4. India, home to the largest number of child laborers in the world, has banned children under the age of 14 from working as domestic servants at hotels, teashops, restaurants and resorts. REUTERS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday SPORTS

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WHAT'S INSIDE

■ Luat trips world champion, joins Django in semis /A24

■ Wade wants what Jordan has/A28

■ 'B' test confirms: Landis positive/A27
■ Tiger claws way to top with 3 holes left/A27

Tams rip Falcons; Eagles-Tigers up

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE FAR EASTERN TAMARAWS HAVE surely snapped out of their nightmarish start.

Breathing fire throughout, the defending champion Tamaraws humbled the Adamson Falcons with a 98-78 rout in the UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

GAMES TODAY
(Araneta Coliseum)
2 p.m.--UP vs UE (Srs)
4 p.m.--Ateneo vs UST (Srs)

Jeff Chan fueled the Tamaraws' early scoring barrage, drilling in 13 of his 18 points in the first half. Jonas Villanueva took over in the last two periods to notch a team-high 20 markers.

It was the second straight win for the Tamaraws of coach Bert Flores after a horrendous 0-4 start.

"We have a lot to work on, but somehow we're picking up," said Flores. "We defended from start to finish. I saw the players' aggressiveness and desire."

The Falcons slid to third at 3-3, while the Tamaraws joined the National Bulldogs at 2-4 at the end of their first-round campaigns.

The Tamaraws opened with a 14-6 charge and led 45-30 midway in the second period. After the break, Villanueva stepped up to score 10 points that boosted the Tamaraws to a commanding 25-point advantage, 70-45.

Eaglets soar

Earlier, the Ateneo Eaglets streaked to their sixth straight win with a 95-85 decision over the Santo Tomas Tiger Cubs to sweep the first round in junior play.

The Ateneo Eagles will try to replicate their junior squad's feat when they tackle the UST Tigers at 4 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum.

"All our games have been difficult," said coach Norman Black after the Eagles posted an 82-75 triumph over the University of the East Warriors last week.

Although the Eagles seemed to have taken the spotlight from the title-favorite Warriors, Black said the team has to keep its focus.

"For us, the goal from the beginning of the competition remains the same," he said. "We're trying to make it in the top two. We're trying to avoid what happened to us the last two years, which was getting into the Final Four but not getting the twice-to-beat advantage."

The Warriors, who hold a 3-2 record, will try to keep second spot versus the University of the Philippines Maroons at 2 p.m.

Meanwhile, the Maroons will have to play minus sweet-shooting rookie Martin Reyes, whose father recently passed away.

The scores:

First Game (Jrs)

ATENEO 95-Rivera 17, Gamboa 17, Gonzaga 15, Balmaceda 14, Austria 12, Katipunan 9, Dumrique 7, Ezquievel 2, Aportadera 2, Tiongson 0, Golla 0, Valera 0, Gamboa 0, Enriquez 0.

UST 85-Laconico 29, Reyes 17, Buendia 15, Sarsonas 15, Cunanan 3, Aquino 2, Ledesma 2, Banquicio 2, Francisco 0, Perez 0.

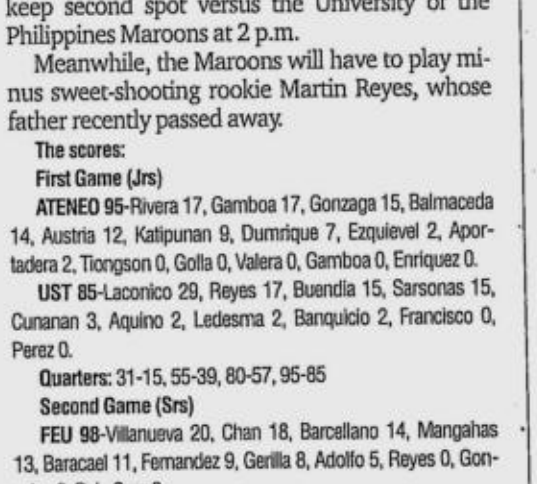
Quarters: 31-15, 55-39, 80-57, 95-85

Second Game (Srs)

FEU 98-Villanueva 20, Chan 18, Barcellano 14, Mangahas 13, Baracael 11, Fernandez 9, Gerilla 8, Adolfo 5, Reyes 0, Gonzales 0, Dela Cruz 0.

ADAMSON 78-Bono 22, Cabahug 13, Canuday 12, Poloyapoy 11, Santos 5, Orera 4, Agustin 4, Pacheco 3, Hugnatan 2, Gonzalgo 2, Gorospe 0, Basillo 0.

Quarters: 24-16, 54-39, 79-62, 98-78



FAR Eastern University's Jonas Villanueva goes for a reverse lay-up against Adamson's Jerry Orera in yesterday's game. RYAN LIM

Newcomer San Sebastian-Cavite posts 4th straight victory

By Marc Anthony Reyes

SAN SEBASTIAN-CAVITE STUNNED New Era University, 75-72, to post its fourth straight win in men's basketball of the National Athletics Association of Schools, Colleges and Universities at the NEU Gym Friday.

Ric Gracilla had 19 points, while Jerome Cenita canned in 17 for the Baycats, who are creating a stir on their maiden appearance in the league.

Veteran Jeff de Guzman unloaded 27 points for the Hunters but these were not enough to save them from sinking to their second defeat in five games.

Earlier, NEU and AMA Computer had a field day disposing of San Sebastian-Cavite in the juniors and women's divisions, respectively.

The Baby Hunters leaned on their balanced attack, led by Jack Tagal and Mel Pepito, to score an 84-51 rout for their second straight victory in their division. The SSC-R-Cav Junior Baycats absorbed their second loss in a row.

NEU had the luxury of using the entire bench after catching SSC-R-Cav flat-footed in the first quarter when the Baby Hunters pulled away, 29-6.

That didn't change as the Junior Baycats plodded along despite the efforts of main man Bubuy Ba-to who topscored with 11 points for the visiting club.

Earlier, Miggy Abadilla took charge as the Lady Titans routed the Lady Baycats, 77-34. Abadilla's heroics inspired Happy Ong, Lourdes Cruz and Tonet Yao who also finished with double-digit performances.

FIRST GAME (w)

AMACU 77—Abadilla 23, Ong 14, Cruz 13, Yao 12, Morado 6, Palada 3, Ramoran 2, Fandinola 2, Vargas 2, Santos 0, Hernandez 0, Samonte 0.

SSC-R CAVITE 34—Dadal 11, McNeal 8, Caganap 5, Nazareno 4, Garcia 3, Isla 1, Bustero 0, Advincula 0.

Quarters: 23-11, 44-20, 60-31, 77-34.

SECOND GAME (jrs)

NEU 84—Tagal 14, Pepito 11, Maglalang 9, Najera 8, Sarmiento 7, Tumanan 6, Luna 6, Cadelino 6, Domingo 5, Abalos 3, Ocampo 3, Perlas 3, Mangandi 2, Villados 0, Lopez 0.

SSC-R CAVITE 51—Ba-to 11, Serrano 8, Filia 7, Weinstein 5, Diang 5, Sanchez 3, Antipuesto 3, Plameras 2, Martinez 2, Mendez 1, Garcia 0.

Quarters: 29-6, 50-24, 73-40, 84-51.

Miñoza fires 71, nears big payoff

FRANKIE MIÑOZA CHARGED INTO CONtention in his bid for a first victory in five years after firing a one-under-par 71 yesterday to stay just four strokes off the lead in the Sun Chlorella Classic at the Otaru Country Club in Hokkaido, Japan.

The 46-year-old Miñoza, still seeking his first Top 10 finish this season, scattered five birdies against four bogeys for his second straight subpar round that pushed him to seventh place with a 214 aggregate for 54 holes.

Miñoza was just four strokes off Tetsuji Hiratsuka, who carded a 68 for 210. Two other Japanese aces, Hideto Tanihara and Mitsuhiro Tateyama, were tied for second at 211 after a 67 and 71, respectively.

Miñoza's last of six titles in the Japan Tour came in the 2001 Fujisankei Classic.

Should lady luck smile on him today, he will bring home the champion's pot of 30 million yen (about P13.5 million) out of the total prize money of 150 million yen (about P67.5 million).

What could bolster Miñoza's bid is that 11 players have either held or shared the lead in the first three rounds.

Last week, Miñoza posted his best showing of 13th place in The Golf Tournament in Omaezaki after a series of mediocre finishes in his first six events.

Meanwhile, Debbie de Villa is preparing for his crack at the US Women's Amateur championship starting Monday (Tuesday in Manila) in Portland, Oregon.

De Villa, the only Filipino entry in the event, will try to emulate the feat achieved by Dorothy Delasin in 1999 when she won the world's most prestigious women's amateur competition.

Venue of the US Amateur is the Witch Hollow course of the Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club. *Jong Arcano*

DJANGO BUSTAMANTE: Another crack at glory.

Luat trips world champion, joins Django in semis

Bata bows out of race

RODOLFO "BOY SAMSON" LUAT ELIMINATED REIGNING World 9-Ball champion and hometown bet Wu Chia-ching, 9-3, and joined eminent Filipino compatriot Francisco "Django" Bustamante in the semifinals of the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour 2006 third leg at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Center in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, Saturday.

Bustamante advanced to the final four against another Taiwanese, finishing strong to score a 9-5 win over 2005 overall champion "The Son of Pool" Yang Shing-chun.

LUAT

Luat, from Angeles City, seeks a title slot against Indian Muhammad Zulfikri, who upset Korean Jeong Young-Hwa, 9-6.

Bustamante, who will try to make it an all-Filipino finals, goes for the championship berth against hometown bet Hsia Hui-kai, who ousted Masaaki Tanaka of Japan, 9-2.

Luat, the newest member of the Philippine San Miguel Asian 9-ball squad, conquered jet lag and fatigue to beat Taiwanese Wang Hung-hsiang, 9-3, and qualify from Group 6.

Although he lost, 4-9, to Indonesian Ricky Yang, Luat squeezed through under the point system as Yang went down to Wang, 6-9.

Zulfikri and Korean Jeong had the easiest time in the opening round, needing only to win one match each, as the Hong Kong-based players they were set to encounter in their respective groups did not arrive due to a strong typhoon that hit their country.

Philippine billiards patron Aristeo "Putch" Puyat said he is confident Luat will win his semifinal clash today against his Indian foe.

Earlier, Maasaki ousted Efren "Bata" Reyes, 9-6; while Yang subdued Gandy Valle, 9-2; and Filipino-Malaysian Ibrahim Bin-Amir, 9-8.

Wu moved up against Luat by topping Group 1 following victories over Chan Keng-Kwang, 9-4 and 2006 Bangkok leg champ, Ramil Gallego, 9-3. *Marlon Bernardino, contributor*

Phelps rules 200m medley

IRVINE, CALIFORNIA—WORLD RECORDholder Michael Phelps won the 200m individual medley at the US Swimming Championships on Friday in a world-leading time of 1 min 56.50 sec.

Phelps, who captured his fifth title in four days, was under his own world record pace through the butterfly and backstroke legs, finished 28-hundredths of a second in front of Ryan Lochte, who took silver in 1:56.78.

Eric Shanteau was third in 1:58.05, the trio turning in the top three times in the world this year.

Phelps's and Lochte's performances were the fourth- and sixth-fastest of all time.

"It hurt, but its supposed to hurt," Phelps said. "It goes back to the crowd. When you're in a race you can feel the energy, and it makes it more exciting. With the three of us swimming as fast as we did tonight, hopefully we can send a message in this event, and hopefully we can keep bringing the time standard down even further." *AFP*

Unranked Olivarez heads age-group tennis winners

UNRANKED ERIC OLIVAREZ BEAT JEREMIah Latorre, 6-4, 6-2, to lead the first-round winners in the boys' 12-under division of the Olivarez Age-Group Tennis Championships at the Olivarez Tennis Center.

Olivarez will next meet No. 8 Rafael Squillantini, who blanked Thomas Nguyen, 6-0, 6-0.

Other winners were Joachim Samson over Argil Canizares, 6-3, 4-6 (10-6), Kevin Espayos over Chard Dominisac, 4-6, 6-4 (10-3), Brysl Libao over Vince Gumban, 6-0, 6-2, Mauro Bengzon over Jainul Burahan, 6-1, 6-0, John Ribaya over Daniel Um, 6-1, 6-2, and Alwaleed Alsayyah over Mistafa Burahan, 6-0, 6-0.

First-round winners in the boys' 14-under category were No. 4 Jigo Peña over Martin Dimaranan, 6-0, 6-0, No. 7 John Ribaya over Daniel Um, 6-0, 6-0, Indy Oaminal over Joseph Atacador, 6-3, 6-0, Braullio de Castro over Mustafa Burahan, 6-0, 6-0, Thomas Nguyen over Miguel Magat, 6-2, 6-2, and Enrique Ferrer over Kurt Cristobal, 6-1, 6-3.

In the girls' 12-under division, unseeded Critabelle Paulino rallied past Treena Quirrez, 4-6, 6-2 (10-5), to forge a second-round showdown with top seed Shanine Olivarez, who had first-round bye together with No. 2 Patsy Orteza, No. 3 Akiko de Guzman and No. 4 Joana Peña.

In the unisex 10-under class, sixth seed Claudio Canlas downed Jainul Burahan, 6-3, 6-2, to advance in the second round against Neil Joshua Garbo, a 7-6, 6-3 winner over Darwin delos Reyes.

In other matches, Alija Arevalo outplayed Mariela Malixi, 7-6, 7-5, Joachim Samson won over Mimo Tomacruz, 6-0, (ret.), and Jana Hernandez prevailed over Matthew Torres, 6-2, 6-3.

Race 1—(Tri)—Speed Attraction (2), Bloodline (3), Magic 'N Magic
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—I Love This Game (6), Mes Monique (3), Striker (7), Eye Candy (5), U Are My Sunshine (2)
Race 3—Hear Me (2), Fast Reason (3)
Race 4—(Qrt/Tri)—Sandok (6), Express Strike (3), Dakdak (7), Sky Bound (4)
Race 5—(Tri)—Ballet Danseuse (3), Iron Heart (5), Successful Dream (5)
Race 6—(Qrt/Tri)—Erica's Talent (3), Easy Rider (2), Luck Of (4), Aim ANd Fire (2)
Race 10—(Qrt/Tri)—Overture/Valid Hazm (5), Divine Diva (1), Refreshing (2), Virgin Island (6)
Race 11—(Qrt/Tri)—Latin Music (7), Extreme Romance (4), Rock Attack Attack (5), Fernan Ikaw Pa Rin (3)
Race 12—(Qrt/Tri)—Starsky And Hutch (2), Lord Brian (4), Red Diamond (5), Kate Alex (6)
Race 13—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Jayvie's Godfather (9), Romario (3), Long Hitter (1), Onceopunatime (6), War Hero (7), Genie In Disguise/Infinite Passion (2)

BY TOP CHOICE
The Irish (7), Manila's Magic (5)
Race 7—(Tri)—Cara Dura (2), Tout Est Grace (3), Please Do (5)
Race 8—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Stalkis (4), Heroics (7), Danseuse (1), California Lady (5), Speed Advantage (9)
Race 9—(Qrt/Tri)—Striking THunder (1), Mountain Eagle (6), House Of Riches

SPORTSWATCH

Rojano rules MCC executive chess

JUAN ROJANO JR. OF MANILA CITY HALL DOWNED RUBEN MEDINA IN 56 moves of a Ruy Lopez to rule the July edition of the MCC Executive Active chess tournament held over the weekend at St. Francis Square, Mandaluyong City. Rojano, a chess coordinator of Ali Atienza's Manila Youth Games, finished with 4.5 points on four wins and one draw. Medina, a former UP vanguard, tied in 2nd-5th places with engineer Apollo Zantua of Steel Corp., lawyer Cliburn Orbe and restaurateur Richard dela Cruz with 4.0 points each.

Two super-bantam fights on Fistorama

FISTORAMA FEATURES AT 3:30 P.M. TODAY TWO EXCITING SUPER-BANtamweight bouts. Roderick Wakit faces William Naimes in the four-round curtain-raiser while Charlie Angel battles Elmer Paganpan in the 10-round main event. Fistorama is shown twice weekly through ABS-CBN Global's TFC/Pinoy Central TV. It is also aired on RPN-9. Golf Power Plus, featuring the elimination match between FEU Team 1 and St. Francis of Assisi College Team 2 in the PCSO Women's Inter-Collegiate Beach Volleyball Challenge, airs at 3 p.m. on RPN-9.

Bates stagfest at Makati Coliseum

THE 2006 STAGFIGHTING SEASON STARTS AT MAKATI COLISEUM ON AUG. 28 and 30 via the annual Richard L. Bates 7-stag derby, the longest-running stagfest series in the country. Now on its 25th year, the event will be hosted by breeder Richard Bates with the full backing of B-Meg Derby Ace. A total pot of P700,000 awaits the winners for an entry fee of P16,500. For farm-to-farm screening and wingbanding, call 824-0237, 0916-7238412 (Ms Verna Bates), 896-3545 and 895-6475. Stags with wingbands of PCAP, LGBA, GF-BAN, Migba, Bakbakan, Balbina, NGBA and Pagba will be accepted subject to re-classification.

BASKETBALL LUNCH—The National Basketball Conference recently hosted lunch for officials of its counterpart in Taiwan—Hualien Probation Basketball—who are visiting the Philippines. Seated from left are NBC secretary general Tito Palma, executive vice president and Tagaytay City Mayor Bambol Tolentino, president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla, Sen. and HPB president Lin Yo Chih, his wife Chun Yu and his secretary Wu Jin-fa, financial officer Chao Tsun-yi, Che Mine Cheh, Huang Chia chin, Wang Chun-ying and assistant secretary Kuo Ming hua. NBC cagers had competed in the HPB international tourney for the last two years.

War looms over Pacquiao's fortunes

COMMENTARY

By Hermie Rivera

THE 1993 TEAM TERRIBLE, featuring the father and son tandem of three-time world champion Erik Morales, was one of boxing's storied ensembles of the late nineties.

The engaging Tijuana bunch did well in ambushing boxing's elite in their 13-year run, amassing three world title belts replete with millions of US bank notes that invariably went to the banks of d' winnah.

A bond of filial loyalty flourished in the closely knit group with the nucleus staying intact until the hard-punching Mexicano went loco by firing his father Jose, a credible mentor in their halcyon days.

It was a costly blunder by the three-time champ, coming as it did when Erik dealt Manny Pacquiao a nasty beating in their first meeting at the MGM Grand.

In the rematch, Morales suffered his first knockout in 52 fights, a 10th round stoppage by Pacquiao who was devastatingly hot in that cold January night.

That was then.

Now, Daddy is back and son Erik is insisting on a sure win in the obligatory rubber bout which could close out the Pacquiao-Morales historied rivalry.

The Filipino ring marvel says he'll be at the Thomas and Mack Center (scene of their earlier carnage) to personally hand Morales his retirement papers after he does a repeat-thrashing of the gutsy Mexican.

Morales' forced retreat to a secluded barrio could happen if he fails in his crucial November bid against our champ who continues to excel over all of the other ring standouts to include Rocky Juarez, Juan Manuel Marquez, Marco Antonio Barrera.

Why is the Cotabato Marvel hell-bent in sending the Tijuana Warrior to an early pasture?

This has got to do, I guess, with Pac Man's planned jump to a political ring, which is far distinct from the roped square he's used to.

Hmm, a lot riskier undertaking?

Now, to the hottest query I get these days as to who of the two great talents gets ticketed early out of the hunt?

"The guy who can put together in one package speed, grace and power," says Eddie Futch, trainer par excellence.

While Manny is an excellent fighter, his poise gets skewed or perverted, if you will, especially during fierce exchanges in a given round. Neither is he graceful.

But he can punch faster and decidedly harder than any of the current crop of beak-busters seeing action in the various weight classifications.

Morales counters with a guarantee of an all out, hand-to-hand fracas that could bring not only closure to his bloody, if not deadly, battle with the GenSan superman, but of untold riches as well.

Aah, such braggadocio.

Generally viewed as a fight that compels fans to pick a winner, I have once more declined to foretell how this stirring rematch would play out knowing that a slip would not only be costly but calamitous as well.

But really, the impending fistic war, rife with unrelenting power punching between two proud but brave braggarts could, in a way, rival the intensity of the hostile strife currently plaguing Israel and Lebanon.

'Nuff said.

And before I momentarily sign off—will Pac Man's belligerent subalterns quit dipping into his coffers and observe a moment of truce as intermediaries (well-intentioned if you please) try to end the internecine war for control of Pacquiao's fortune?

Abangan!

Angolans prove superior over SMC-Pilipinas five in Al-Emadi tilt

DOHA, QATAR—SMC-PILIPINAS FELL ONE BIG FINISH SHORT OF pulling off an upset once again.

Angola struggled at the start but finished strong to down SMC-Pilipinas Friday, 82-67, in the Al-Emadi International basketball championship at the Al-Gharafa Sports Club Hall here.

With the win, the World Basketball tournament-bound African champions wound up second in the elimination round with a 2-1 slate.

The Africans will meet host Qatar in the semifinals while the Filipinos will meet top-seed Latvia Saturday. The winners collide for the title Saturday.

"That's what I was saying with our schedule," said SMC-Pilipinas head coach Chot Reyes. "The new schedule had us playing five straight games. That left me no choice but to rest some of the guys in the fourth quarter."

The bigger Angolans, ironically, leaned on their long-range snipers to pull off the victory.

Milton Barros, who led all scorers with 23 points, thwarted every SMC-Pilipinas rally in the fourth quarter with flawless shooting from beyond the arc.

The Nationals started strong against the burly Angolans and even took control midway through the second period.

Mick Pennisi dropped two three-point bombs in a blistering run that had SMC-Pilipinas coming back from a 14-17 deficit to take a 28-21 lead.

It was a short stay on top for the Filipinos though. Barros and Joaquin Gomes quickly went to work and Angola regained a 39-32 lead at the half.

In the third quarter, it was Olimpio Cipriano's turn to frustrate the Filipinos, banging in one triple after another to stretch Angola's lead to 52-40.

SMC-Pilipinas, outfitted by Accel, still has a remote chance to claim the title with back-to-back victories this weekend.

"The big game is against Latvia in the semis. That's the one we need to get. We got to be ready for that game," Reyes said.

The fiery chief tactician knows it's not going to be easy, but he did not discount the possibility of an upset.

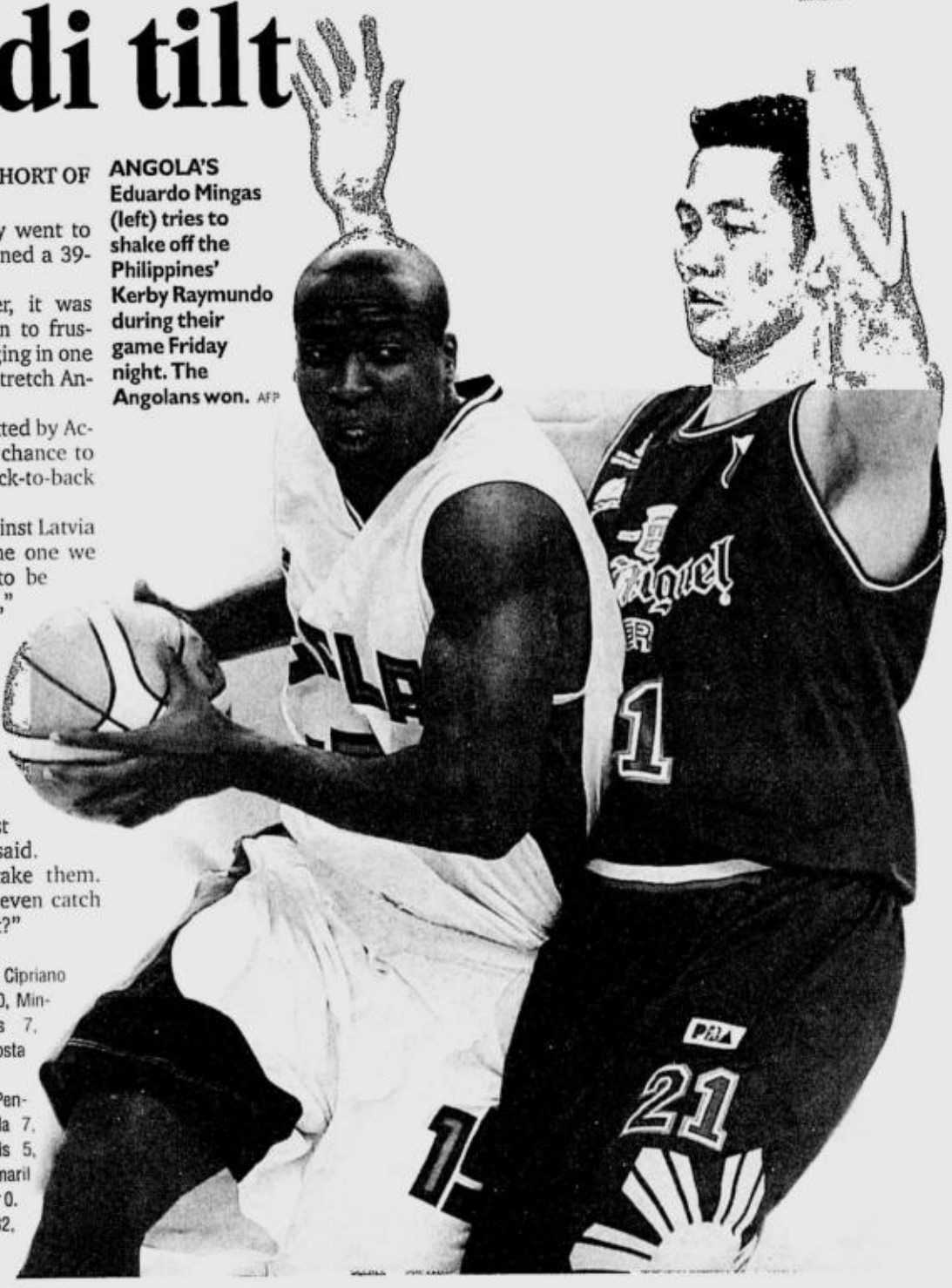
"We showed we can play well against these guys," Reyes said. "We know we can take them. Who knows, we may even catch them on their off-night?"

The scores:

ANGOLA 82 – Barros 23, Cipriano 11, A. Costa 10, Moussa 10, Mingas 9,Morais 8, Gomes 7, Emanuel 2, Almeida 2, L. Costa 0.

SMC-PILIPINAS 67 – Pennisi 15, Pena 10, Miranda 7, Canaleta 7, Miller 7,Reavis 5, Santos 5, Raymundo 4, Mamaril 3, Tenorio 3, Yeo 1, Fonacier 0.

Quarters: 17-14, 39-32, 60-50, 82-67.



ANGOLA'S Eduardo Mingas (left) tries to shake off the Philippines' Kerby Raymundo during their game Friday night. The Angolans won. AFP

Eala nixes trades of 8 players

By June Navarro

IT WAS BASICALLY A SOUND DEAL EXCEPT for one glitch.

And as a result of this critical detail, the eight-player trade involving Barangay Ginebra, Coca-Cola and Air21 has been turned down by the Philippine Basketball Association yesterday.

Commissioner Noli Eala, tasked by the Board of Governors to determine whether the trade was above board, said there was an irregularity in the transaction as Air21 recovered its 2007 and 2008 first-round picks from Coca-Cola after dealing Manny Ramos and Kalani Ferreria to the Tigers.

Based on the findings of the Commissioner's Office, the Express initiated the negotiations by shipping Ryan Bernardo along with their two first-round picks to the Tigers.

The Tigers exchanged Billy Mamaril, Rafi Reavis and the rights to Rudy Hatfield, whom the Express immediately sent to the Barangay Ginebra Kings, who swapped Aris Dimaunahan, Ervin Sotto, Ferreria and Ramos in return.

Eala said the irregularity came when the Express traded Ferreria and Ramos to the Tigers and retrieved their two future first-round picks.

"Air21 should have kept the four players while Coca-Cola retained the two first-round picks," Eala told the INQUIRER.

According to league rules, a team which transferred its player or draft rights "may not re-acquire such rights prior to the end of the season in which the transfer occurred, or, if the transfer occurred between seasons, prior to the end of the next succeeding season."

"Therefore, that move is hereby disapproved in its entirety," said Eala. "The affected teams are free to present a revised deal, which will accordingly and fully conform to the applicable rules of the PBA."

Air21 governor Lito Alvarez said the teams involved in the trade would go back to the drawing board and come up with a deal beneficial to the parties concerned and conforms to the rules of the league.

"The negotiations will definitely go back from scratch," Alvarez told the INQUIRER. "Though we want Dimaunahan and Sotto badly, we don't want to forego our 2007 and 2008 first-round picks."

Da Vance, Reyes not turning pro

TIME FOR TEAMS TO MAKE UP THEIR minds.

Fil-Ams Rob Reyes and Joe Da Vance yesterday withdrew their applications for the annual PBA draft, sealing the cast of amateurs from which teams will pick this season's batch of rookies.

And if there are things teams would want to find out about those that did make it to the final list, yesterday's pre-draft workout could provide clues.

Of the 46 players who joined the rookie camp yesterday at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center, a handful emerged tops in the different tests they were put through by camp director Norman Black.

Aaron Aban and Mark Isip tied for the vertical list test, leaping to a height of 11 feet and one inch. Jireh Ibañez topped the agility test and the push-up drill. Chico Lanete topped the 60m sprint in 7.63 seconds. Christian Guiterrez, on the other hand, lorded it over in the pull-ups and bench press.

The rookie camp has been expanded from a one-day affair at its onset in 2003 to a week-long affair this year.

"We feel the coaches didn't have enough time before to evaluate the players more thoroughly," said PBA commissioner Noli Eala.

Reyes and Da Vance would have been among those tested yesterday but they withdrew their applications when it became apparent that they couldn't get their documents done before the Aug. 14 deadline.

Of the three Fil-Ams touted to be among the first five picks, only Kelly Williams managed to get his citizenship orders in time to join this year's draft. Among those who attended the first day of camp were Gabby Espinas, Magnum Membrere, Abby Santos and Ronjay Enrile.

Siot welcomes reunion with Jong

TANQUINGCEN

By June Navarro

SIOT TANQUINGCEN DOESN'T feel uneasy playing second fiddle in the coaching staff of a team he had already steered to two straight PBA championships.

In fact, Tanquingcen is looking forward to learning new coaching tricks from his mentor, Jong Uichico, who was replaced as San Miguel Beer coach by Chot Reyes.

"I look at this as just another opportunity to serve under coach Jong," said Tanquingcen, who slid to assistant coach after Uichico

was named head coach of the Barangay Ginebra Kings.

"I've still got a lot to learn from him (Uichico),"

Tanquingcen, who steered the Kings to the championships in the 2004-2005 All Filipino and the Fiesta transition conference before it, sees the change as a big opportunity to further hone his skills under Uichico.

"I always seek

his (Uichico) advice when I was still the head coach so I see no problem serving under him," said Tanquingcen.

"I'm here to help coach Jong and the team win games. I'll do whatever the team wants me to do," he added.

Tanquingcen was Uichico's assistant at SMB when he was elevated as heach coach replacing Allan Caidic five games into the 2004 Fiesta transition conference. Tanquingcen immediately led the Kings to the title and followed it up with another one in the 2004-2005 All-Filipino.

NSAs must submit by-laws, constitutions, says Peping

By Musong R. Castillo

TO ASSURE THAT ONLY THE INTERESTS OF all sports are served, the Philippine Olympic Committee will require all National Sports Associations to submit their respective constitutions and by-laws for approval.

"This would be imperative for us to know that only the associations' interests are served and not the interests of a few," POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco told the INQUIRER in an interview.

But before the local Olympic body gets its hands on all 38 or so constitutions, it is working on the approval of its own from the International Olympic Committee, hopefully before the end of this quarter.

"They (IOC) have not given us a deadline, they're actually not very strict with it (deadline)," Cojuangco said. "But we want to secure approval at the soonest possible time and implement this (on the NSAs)."

Not being approved by the POC as a legitimate NSA, because of a disapproved constitution and by-laws, would make the sports association unqualified to represent the country in international meets sanctioned by the IOC.

Cojuangco said this move would help prevent people who head NSAs from making a mess of their agencies, but instead work only for their betterment.

The former Tarlac representative gave the long-running case of the Basketball Association of the Philippines as an example.

Acting on a vote of 33 other NSAs in a general assembly a year ago, the POC expelled the BAP from the local Olympic movement which subsequently resulted in the suspension of the Philippines from all international cage events sanctioned and run by the world-governing Fiba.

The expulsion stemmed from what the POC had said was mismanagement of the BAP.

Cojuangco also mentioned the national football association which is undergoing heavy scrutiny from several provincial associations due to the sordid state of the sport in the country.

CHAMP: Ms Sylvia Lina, wife of FedEx/Air21 chair Bert Lina, receives the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Cup from RP-Air21 coach Johny Tam and other team members during a courtesy call recently. The Filipinos, supported by the Basketball Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Burlington Socks, Accel and Federal Tyres, beat Malaysia to capture the title in the four-nation tournament held in Shonghan, China.

MARLON STOCKINGER: Fifteen-year old sensation

Euro Challenge: Stockinger crashes top 10

FILIPINO KARTER MARLON STOCKINGER made it to the top 10 of the recent third leg of the Rotax Euro Challenge held at the A1 Speedworld in Austria.

After clocking the third fastest qualifying time out of the 67 Rotax Max Senior drivers, the 15-year-old Stockinger started in pole position for the first qualifying heat next to world champion Wesleigh Orr of South Africa.

Stockinger finished second in heats one and three, but a race incident with Austrian Dominik Kraihamer dropped him to 23rd in heat two.

As a result, Stockinger had to start from 15th place in the pre-final, two places ahead of Orr, who suffered a spark plug failure in one of the qualifying runs.

"Orr encouraged me to move up the field together with him, but I wasn't able to follow him," said Stockinger. "His driving style is just awesome. I have a lot to learn."

Bucking the hot and dusty conditions that gave him an eye infection, Stockinger executed a blistering start in the final and finished eighth.

"I'm happy with the result," said Stockinger. "This was only the third leg in the Euro Challenge and I was able to compete with the top drivers up front. I overheard some of them asking 'who is this guy?' Now they know my name."

Stockinger, who is sponsored by Swiss Finance & Investment Corp. (SFIC), Accel, Birel Motorsport, Kart Care, Kartmore Racing Services, Salon Prive and Malaysia Airlines, now set his eyes on the 2006 Euro Challenge Rookie of the Year title.

TV coverage of the Rotax Euro Challenge can be seen on www.raceworld.tv/karting.

WNCAA BATTLE: St. Stephen College's Alyanah Duyan and Angelicum High School's Jhanomi Velasco dispute the rebound in their Women's National Collegiate Athletic Association game yesterday at the Cuneta Astrodome. Angelicum won, 53-36. RYAN LIM

Senior League titlists fly to US Wednesday

By Musong R. Castillo

A HARDY BUNCH OF TEEners will leave for the United States on Wednesday not only to gun for baseball glory but to restore worldwide Philippine pride in the Senior League World Series as well.

Fourteen years after an eligibility scandal rocked the very foundation of the sport in the country, a new—and legitimate—team of 15-16-year-old boys set forth to slug it out with the world's best and try to give the Philippines back the respect it deserves.

The Philippines will be playing as the Far East champion only for the second time since 1992 when it was stripped of a world title because of overage players.

And win or lose, this stint will be one to remember.

"We are training to put the name (of the Philippines) in front (of the uniform) more importance than the names in the back," manager Arsenic Laurel said in between holes of his regular Saturday foursome at the Manila Golf Club.

"This is a selfless team that we have and I am optimistic that we will be competitive."

After finally securing visas for nine of its players on Friday, the RP squad is set for a 25-hour trip by air and land starting Wednesday. The team flies to Tokyo first before stopping in Detroit, Portland and Maine.

From there, a two-hour bus ride will take them to Bangor, site of the Senior League championship where the Filipino boys will only have five days to get accustomed to a world class playing field.

ARSENIC LAUREL

"We hope to be able to get off jet lag as fast as we could," Laurel said.

Up first for the Filipinos will be the West champions represented by California, and Laurel knows nothing about the first team that they will go up against other than the opposing pitcher.

He couldn't even recall the name, only the fact that his little research revealed that the hurler owns the meanest fastball in the tournament.

Tall right-hander Gian Jimenes will be the Philippines' ace with Paolo Mallari, Bastie Uichico, Matt Laurel and Angelo Esguerra completing the pitching rotation.

The Philippines earned the right to play in the World Series after topping the Asia-Pacific regional championship over Saipan in Jakarta, Indonesia, early last month.

It was a stint practically no one knew. The team left the country without fanfare and arrived as regional champion greeted by very little praise.

The 1992 incident only helped alienate the sport of baseball in this country that has become so enamored with basketball.

Very few actually cared if the Philippines ever did return to that big stage known as the World Series—even if it wasn't for a shot at winning the pennant itself.

But these boys do. After their 25-hour trip, they know they will be playing in their field of dreams.

Metro Manila bets dominate Kimoni Battle of Champions

DANDY ANSAY AND REYNALDO YASAY copped the men's doubles Masters crown to highlight Metro Manila shuttlers domination of the recent Kimoni Badminton Tour Battle of Champions at the Market! Market! at the Fort.

Ansay and Yasay turned back the challenge of Wilson Castañeda and Bryan Payte as Metro Manila bets raked in seven of the 13 hotly contested categories in the weekend grand finale of the event backed by Pagcor and Powerade, the official sports drink.

Also coming up with big wins for Metro Manila were Ryan de Guzman-Gerrynie Bagunas in the Elite category, JR Regoso-Abner Eustaquio in the Intermediate 2 and Gerwin Santos-Arnel Pagalilauan in Novice play of the men's doubles, Vangie Cabuhat-Grace Guerzon in ladies doubles Novice, Denden Dimarucu-Mia Villarin in juniors 16-20 years and Luigi Recomono-Gelita Castillo in juniors 15 and under.

Kidapawan fought for the pride of the provincial entries, capturing the ladies doubles-Elite through Amor Angeles-Marivi Enanoria), mixed doubles-Intermediate courtesy of Alfred Cabarubias Jr.-Joylyn Rualo) and the mixed doubles-Novice through Jun Metilla-Lea Tacsan.

Other winners in the competition were Michael Carlos-Apple Rodriguez of Pampanga in the mixed doubles-Elite category and Davao's Marlyn Acosta-Mary May Labis in the ladies doubles-intermediate.

Ten celebrity matches were flagged off right after the exhibition games, while top models wowed the audience when the first line of Kimoni casual wear was unveiled after the championship matches.

The lifestyle wears created by the 21-year-old Kimoni International Fashion Designer, Shermie Bautista, flaunted the Asian and European mix that was paraded in the Fashionably Kimoni show, hosted by Michael V.

The exhibition match played by former nationals Ronald and Rocky Magnaye against top Colin Haughton and John Leung, topnotch aces of Britain and Wales, proved to be an exciting, crowd-drawing event.

Loel Lamela won P10,000 in cash and a new Fuji digital camera for topping the Fuji Photo contest.

"I couldn't believe we were able to pull it off," said Billy Lim-It, Chief Executive Officer and president of Kimoni Philippines of a series which was participated in by thousands of players from all over the country.

Limited Edition Kimoni Golden Power worth P40,000 and gift packs were awarded to the level-category champions of the event the highlights of which will be shown on ABC Channel 5.

FACE-OFF: Rexon Flores (left) of the Philippines, and Omar Narvaez of Argentina, face off after their weigh-in in Cordoba, Argentina, Friday. Flores will face world champion Narvaez on Saturday, in a WBO flyweight title fight. AP

Bonds belts 723rd homer

SAN FRANCISCO—BARRY BONDS homered for the first time in two weeks, then lost his cool two innings later.

Bonds hit his 723rd career home run with a solo shot to center in the seventh inning of the San Francisco Giants' wild 5-2 loss to Colorado on Friday, connecting for his first homer since July 20 against San Diego—a span of 26 at-bats.

Yet just when things appeared bright for the embattled San Francisco slugger, he got into it in the ninth with plate umpire Ron Kulpa over a called second strike.

Kulpa immediately ejected the arguing Bonds, who began yelling at the umpire from close range.

Bonds returned to the dugout, sat down and crossed his arms as fans responded by throwing garbage, including beer bottles, onto the field from all directions. *AP*

Ekwe No. 1 bet for MVP, ROY

By Marc Anthony Reyes

WITH THE WAY HE'S BEEN DOMINATing the game, Nigerian Samuel Ekwe could become the first foreign player in recent memory to be awarded NCAA men's basketball Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year.

The 6-foot-8 San Beda exchange student is leading the statistical points which is the basis of the selection for the top two individual honors in the league, among others.

Fortunately for the soft-spoken Ekwe, there are no league rules that restrict a non-Filipino from winning the MVP and the Roy awards in the league, according to NCAA chair of the management committee Bernie Atienza of St. Benilde.

The figures are clearly for the former football player from Lagos: Nine points, 14.4 rebounds and 3.2 blocks on the average during the past nine games.

He has so far collected a league-best 293 statistical points, followed by Philippine Christian's Gabby Espinas (275) who was the last player to have won both the MVP and the ROY awards in the same year in 2004.

Last week, he posted the first triple double performance of the season by scoring 10 points, grabbing 13 rebounds and blocking 11 shots during their game against Jose Rizal, earning him the NCAA Press Corps Player of the Week award.

"He (Ekwe) does more than scoring points for us,'" said San Beda coach Koy Banal, underscoring the importance of having Ekwe to do other tasks while certified point makers like Yousif Aljamal takes care of offense.

The 21-year-old Ekwe followed up that performance with another impressive game against San Sebastian by making seven points, 12 rebounds, three blocks and one steal despite seeing action for only 25 minutes.

His efforts helped the Red Lions extend their winning run to six and occupy solo top spot with an 8-1 record.

SAMUEL Ekwe: Potent force ERIK ARAZAS

RP tracksters cop 3 bronzes

CHIANG MAI—THE FUTURE OF PHIlippine athletics looks bright with Merily Teodosio around.

The 16-year-old Teodosio took two of Team Philippines' three bronze medals in the Asean Schools Track and Field Championships in Thailand over the weekend to live up to her billing as the country's next track queen.

The 5-foot-8 Teodosio, showing the form that netted her seven gold medals in the National Track and Field Championships in Palayan City, last month, placed third in both the triple jump and long jump events to supplement the bronze won by Mark Banting of La Salle Green Hills in boys' javelin.

Teodosio cleared 3.40 meters in the long jump event to finish behind a Malaysian and Thai bet.

In the triple jump, the Aklan native cleared 11.64 meters to grab the bronze behind champion Dao Thi Hoai Thuong of Vietnam (12.45) and silver medalist Noor Amira of Malaysia (12.05).

Medical, dental mission in meet

MORE THAN 600 INDIGENTS ARE EXpected to benefit from the medical and dental mission that will be held together with the Rotary Golfing Fellowship Foundation of the Philippines' Southern leg tournament in Bacolod City on Aug. 24-26.

Among the early team participants in the golfest are the Rotary Clubs of Bagumbayan, San Juanico, Pasig, Tacloban, Bulacan, Bacolod North, Bacolod Marapara, Metro Bacolod, Iloilo and their guests.

Among the early sponsors are Petron Corp., Casino Filipino Hotel, Integrated Pipe Specialist, General Nutrition Centers (GNC), Osim Phils., Icon Pharma Inc., Slazenger, United Laboratories and Ortigas & Co.

For inquiries, contact Pauline B. Sevilla at 0920-9199000, 7248174, fax 7215940 or email rgffp.inc@gmail.com, rgffp1987@yahoo.com.

Mang Team tops Enduro San Mig Light novice

THE ENDURO SAN MIG LIGHT ADVENtures Series 2006 drew intense action from outdoor racers all over the country with Mang Team topping the novice category last July 8.

A total of 62, three-member teams slugged it out for the novice title after the grueling battle in the 24-hour elite category.

But the novice race was no piece of cake as the top three placers finished almost right after the other in the 3-hour race set in Quezon City.

Mang, powered by Daniel Quinto, Merlyn Lumagpas and Romeo Lunar, finished in two hours, 32 minutes and 55 seconds. The brawny threesome bagged the top prize of P15,000 cash and San Mig Light items and trophy.

"The race was hard because there were many opponents, speed and ability were essential," said Quinto.

Team B2K3, composed of Andreco Primero, Roy Hervias and Abigail Yu, came in second after clocking two hours, 49 minutes and 10 seconds. Primero's triad took home P10,000 cash prize.

Grabbing third place was UPM Woohoo 2, with members Rolly Francis Peoro, Jeremiah de Claro and Erika Aranjuez.

UPM Woohoo 2 checked in two minutes behind Team B2K3.

"*Sayang talaga*, two minutes *lang yung* difference, *pero okay lang dahil nag*-enjoy **naman kami sa** race," said Aranjuez. "It's a different kind of thrill."

The race was presented by San Mig Light, the right alcohol less filling beer, and supported by Habagat, Converse, NS Royal Pensione, Rudy Project, Fitness First and Asian Spirit.

WINNERS of the Enduro San Mig Light Adventures Novice category during the awarding ceremony last July 8 in Metrowalk in Ortigas. Daniel Quinto, Merlyn Lumagpas and Romeo Lunar compose Mang Team.

This year marked the biggest adventure racing in the country with 28, squads joined the Elite category in the Manila leg held July 7 to 8.

"So far, it has been the most successful Enduro San Mig Light Adventures, and we promise that it will not end there," said race director Neyney Guevarra. "There's more in store for the Enduro SML racers next year."

Leo Oracion, the first Filipino to reach the summit of Mount Everest, along with Guevarra, mapped out the course.

'B' test confirms: Landis positive

American is 'no longer' Tour de France champ

PARIS—TOUR DE FRANCE champion Floyd Landis' backup urine sample confirmed high levels of testosterone, cycling's governing body said Saturday, raising the prospect that he could lose his title.

Following the results of the "B" sample, Landis was fired by his Swiss team, Phonak. He also faces a two-year ban from USA Cycling, which is responsible for sanctions against the American rider.

"The analysis of the sample B of Floyd Landis' urine has confirmed the result of an adverse analytical finding notified by the anti-doping laboratory of Paris on 26th July, following the analysis of the sample A," the International Cycling Union said, referring to the Chatenay-Malabry lab outside Paris.

"Landis will be dismissed without notice for violating the team's internal Code of Ethics," Phonak said in a statement. "Landis will continue to have legal options to contest the findings. However, this will be his personal affair and the Phonak team will no longer be involved in that."

Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme said Landis was no longer considered the race winner, but the decision to strip him of his title rests with the UCI.

"It goes without saying that for us Floyd Landis is no longer the winner of the 2006 Tour de France," Prudhomme told The Associated Press in a telephone interview.

Prudhomme said runner-up Oscar Pereiro of Spain would be the likely new winner.

"We can't imagine a different outcome," Prudhomme said.

The confirmed test sets off what could now be months of appeals and arguments by Landis, who claims the positive finding was due to naturally high testosterone levels. He has repeatedly declared his innocence and vowed to fight the allegations—and did so again Saturday.

"I have never taken any banned substance, including testosterone," Landis said in a statement. "I was the strongest man at the Tour de France, and that is why I am the champion.

"I will fight these charges with the same determination and intensity that I bring to my training and racing."

THE TRIUMPH that Floyd Landis cooked up dramatically goes down the drain. AP

If found guilty, Landis would become the first winner in the 103-year history of cycling's premier race to lose his Tour crown over doping allegations.

Landis' lawyer is preparing to take the case to arbitration, said a statement issued by his spokesman, Michael Henson.

The two-tiered analysis at the Chatenay-Malabry lab, which is accredited by the World Anti-Doping Agency, is designed to eliminate the chance for mistakes in the first test.

A Landis spokesman said this week that the rider had tested positive for an testosterone-epitestosterone ratio of 11:1—well above the 4:1 limit. *AP*

Wie penalty takes Open spotlight from Inkster

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, ENGLAND—MICHELLE Wie stole the spotlight the wrong way when she was given a two-stroke penalty and fell 10 shots behind second-round leader Juli Inkster at the Women's British Open on Friday.

Wie believed she matched Inkster's even par round of 72 at Royal Lytham but it was turned into a 74 after officials ruled the 16-year-old star made contact with moss in a bunker on her backswing.

Inkster's 6-under total of 138 gave her a three-stroke lead over unheralded Silvia Cavalleri of Italy, and halfway to her 31st career title and eighth major.

By contrast, Wie seems to have little chance of winning her first pro tournament. The American teen came into the tournament with high hopes after a second-place finish at last week's Evian Masters, and top-five finishes in her previous four majors. Two rounds of 74 meant a halfway score only three inside the cut and a tie for 37th.

Six hours after Inkster left the recorders' office with her lead, Wie walked into the same hut to discover she was penalized for her bunker shot beside the 14th green.

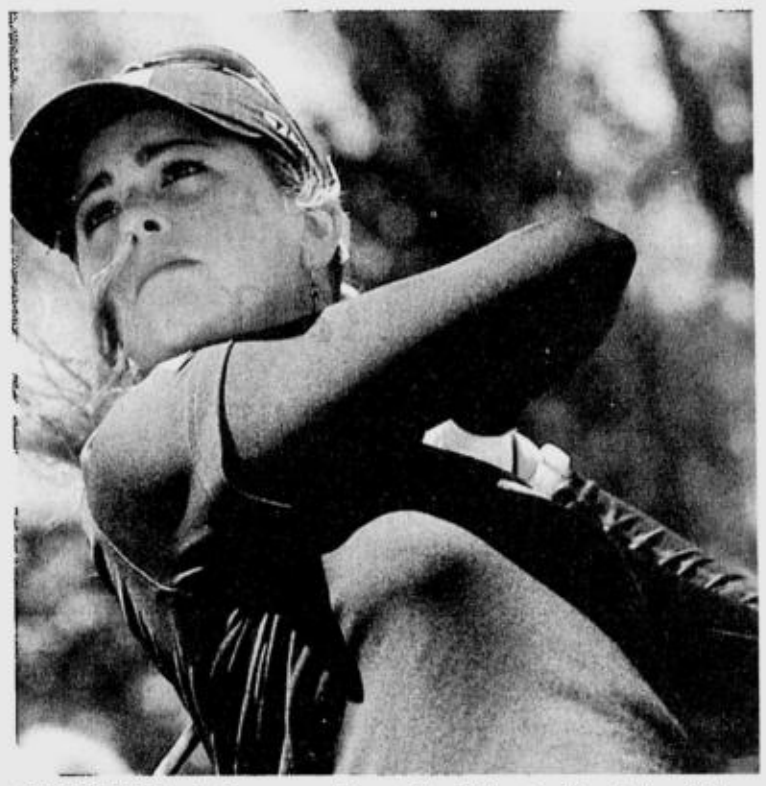
Her touching the moss was picked up by TV viewers and tournament officials.

"There was a piece of moss right behind my ball," Wie said. "I knew I hit it but I didn't think it would result in a penalty of two strokes. I thought if you hit dirt it would be OK but I guess I knew the rule wrong.

"It's not good after you play you find out you add two more shots in the end. The par saves I made on 17 and 18 feel as though they count for nothing in the end."

It's not the first time in her short pro career that Wie has been penalized.

In her pro debut last October at the Samsung World Championship at Palm Desert, California, she took a penalty drop for an unplayable lie during her third round. *AP*



AMERICAN Paula Creamer rallies with a 71 to stay five shots off the lead with a 143-total thus far. AFP

Tiger claws way to top with three holes left

GRAND BLANC, MICHIGAN—TIGER WOODS birdied three straight holes to take the lead in the suspended second round of the Buick Open, then Brett Quigley birdied the 18th hole after the horn sounded to move into a tie on Friday.

Woods, 13 under for the tournament, was 7 under through 15 holes in the second round before play was stopped because of darkness. He will finish his round early Saturday and will start his third round in the afternoon after a long break.

Quigley saved himself an early wakeup call by finishing his last hole for a 6-under 66, and will have an afternoon tee time with the leaders.

"We were running to finish," Quigley said. "We knew it would be 3 more hours of sleep, and we were pushing the group ahead of us from the 14th on."

Jeff Sluman and Bo Van Pelt were two shots back. They both finished the second round, with Sluman shooting a 67, and Van Pelt carding a 66.

Two-time defending champion Vijay Singh, first-round leader Mike Weir and Jim Furyk (68) were in a pack of nine that was three shots behind Woods and Quigley. Singh had five holes left and Weir had three to play in the second round.

Because of storms which ultimately made conditions unplayable on Thursday, just over half of the players were unable to complete the first round. Those unlucky golfers, including Sluman and Van Pelt, were back on the course early Friday, and had a quick turnaround for their second rounds.

Sluman was surprised with his performance because he slept just 3 hours before waking up at 2:30 a.m., unable to get back to sleep.

"I was exhausted starting the round," he said. "And the way I felt, I didn't know if I could play all 30."

Woods started his second round about 29 hours after shooting a 66 on Thursday. *AP*

Frenchman ousts Hewitt, faces Safin

WASHINGTON—FORMER CHAMPION LLEYton Hewitt was upset by France's Arnaud Clement, 7-6 (1), 6-4, in the quarterfinals of the Legg Mason Classic on Friday.

With 11 aces, Clement earned his first victory over third-seeded Hewitt in eight matches since 1999.

"We've played a couple of tough matches, but he was always a little better at the important moments," Clement said. "Today was different."

Typical of their clashes, it took 2 hours, 10 minutes to separate Hewitt, the 2004 Washington winner, and Clement, who reached his first tour semifinals since February at Marseille, where he won his third career title.

Clement will face Marat Safin, who followed up his defeat of top-seeded James Blake by outlasing South Africa's Wesley Moodie, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (9), in just under 2 hours.

Safin and Moodie, both unseeded, couldn't break the other; Safin had three chances and Moodie none. Safin needed four match points to win.

"Once you win the first set and when you have the opportunity to close in the second set like that, you become a little bit nervous," Safin said. "You know he's playing with nothing to lose."

The Russian reached his first semifinals since April at Valenica. The former world No. 1 has slumped to No. 92 since he returned to the tour in February from a knee injury which had sidelined him from August.

Countryman Dmitry Tursunov dispatched 2003 champ Tim Henman, 6-3, 6-2, without offering the British veteran a break chance.

"When he's playing like that, he's going to be a tough opponent for anyone," Henman said. "When he's playing that big, there's only so much you can do. Sometimes you just feel like a spectator.

"He's obviously come a long way. He's playing very, very well. I think it's going to be pretty soon that he's in the top 20. And if he keeps stringing it together, he can be in the top 10 as well."

Seventh-seeded Tursunov was runner-up in Los Angeles last week and was sure to improve his career-high 29th ranking with a semifinal against British No. 1 Andy Murray.

Murray struggled to put away Mardy Fish of the United States, 6-2, 6-4. *AP*

Italy's Magnini wins 100 freestyle in Euro swim championships

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY—FILIPPO Magnini of Italy won the gold medal Friday in the men's 100-meter freestyle at the European Swimming Championships.

Magnini's time of 48.79 seconds allowed him to retain his European title. He is also the reigning world champion in the event.

Stefan Nystrand of Sweden was second in 48.91, while Pieter van den Hoogenband of the Netherlands took the bronze in 48.94.

In other finals, Yury Prilukov of Russia won the 1,500 free, his second gold of the championships. In women's races, Inge Dekker of Germany took the 100 butterfly while Kirsty Balfour of Britain won the 200 breast.

In the diving events, Anett Gamm and Nora Subschinski of Germany won the women's 10-meter platform synchro with 325.92 points, while Dmitry Sautri of Russia won gold in the men's three-meter springboard with 496.10 points.

Like at the 2004 Europeans in Madrid, Magnini again managed to defeat Van den Hoogenband, who was making his return to major competition after undergoing a hernia operation last year.

Still, the Dutchman—the world record-holder in the event since the 2000 Sydney Olympics—was happy with his result.

"I was very happy with the bronze medal," Van den Hoogenband said. "Before my surgery, it was very easy for me to swim below 49 seconds, but now it's a huge step for me."

Van den Hoogenband indicated he planned to continue his comeback.

"Now I can start building up and maybe I can break 48 seconds in the next year," the three-time Olympic champ said. "I'm back at world level."

With his victory, Magnini backed up comments made upon his arrival in Budapest, when he said he felt confident and relaxed and it was his competitors who needed to worry about him.

"My time was not so good, but the important thing is I won the medal as I did in 2004 in Madrid," Magnini said.

His winning time was 0.67 seconds off his personal best of 48.12. *AP*

Clijsters, Sharapova knock off foes, grab Acura Classic semifinal tickets

VAIDISOVA AP

SCHNYDER AP

CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA—TOP-SEEDed Kim Clijsters defeated Martina Hingis, 7-5, 6-2, Friday in a sloppy battle of former No. 1 players to advance to the semifinals of the Acura Classic.

Clijsters, ranked second in the world, won a tough first set in which both players made numerous unforced errors. But the Belgian took control in the second set with aggressive play to extend her winning streak to 23 matches in North American summer hardcourt events.

"When you play against Martina, you have to win the points against her," Clijsters said. "She's not a player who's going to hit you off the court. I know that it's up to me to be aggressive and go for the winners. It's also why you take more risks and make more unforced errors."

Clijsters' opponent in Saturday's semifinal will be Czech teenager Nicole Vaidisova, a 3-6, 6-4, 6-3 winner over Russia's Anna Chakvetadze.

Second-seeded Maria Sharapova advanced to the other semifinal, routing defending champion Mary Pierce, 6-2, 6-3. Sharapova will face fifth-seeded Patty Schnyder, who beat fourth-seeded Elena Dementieva, 6-4, 6-3.

Hingis committed 34 unforced errors, while Clijsters had 27. Hingis also hit just 18 winners, compared to 25 for Clijsters.

Clijsters was able to save seven of nine break points she faced. The biggest save came in the sixth game of the first set when Clijsters held a 3-2 lead.

The eight-seeded Hingis was unable to convert on four break points in a game that lasted 15 points before Hingis hit a backhand drop shot wide to put Clijsters ahead 4-2.

Hingis battled back to win the next three games for a 5-4 lead, but Clijsters served out the next game at love to tie the match at 5-all. Clijsters won the final two games to finish off the set.

"You kind of run out of steam when you lose such a set like that," Hingis said.

Clijsters had the only two service breaks in the second set as she completed her third victory over Hingis this year, including wins in the quarterfinals of the Australian and French opens.

"I think I played a good second set," Clijsters said. "But the serve wasn't always where I wanted it to be."

Hingis, who has won five Grand Slam titles, is playing for the first time in three seasons after being sidelined with injuries.

"She puts so much pressure on you all the time," Hingis said.

Sharapova, ranked No. 4, won her third consecutive straight-set match as she overwhelmed Pierce. The Russian teenager ran off seven straight games to overcome a 2-1 first-set deficit and take a 2-0 lead in the second.

"I thought I played solid," said Sharapova, who reached the semis for the eighth time in nine events this season. "After that first break in the second set, I felt pretty much in control." *AP*

CLIJSTERS AP

SHARAPOVA AP

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THE NEXT time Puerto Rico's Elias Ayuso and USA's Dwyane Wade meet, it will be in the world championships. AP

US five brings act to Asia and world tilt

LAS VEGAS—HOURS AFTER A SENSATIONAL debut in overwhelming Puerto Rico, 114-69, the United States departed on Friday for a month in Asia, culminating with the world basketball championship in Japan.

And when it's over, they hope to be wearing gold medals upon their return home.

"It's the longest trip that I've ever taken. I'm really excited," guard Kirk Hinrich said.

The training in the Far East begins with games against China and Brazil next week, the first time a USA Basketball team featuring NBA players has played in China.

That will be followed by more training in South Korea, which features games in Seoul against Lithuania and Korea. After that, it's off to Sapporo, Japan, for the start of the worlds on Aug. 19 against Puerto Rico.

"I'm excited about going over to China, Korea and Japan and see how it is, but most importantly I'm ready to go over there and play," Carmelo Anthony said.

Realizing it could no longer just throw together a team on short notice and expect to win international competitions, USA Basketball revamped its selection process and chose this team in March. The players arrived here in the middle of July, and will be together for nearly a month before their first game tips off.

To the players who were part of a woefully unprepared team that managed only a bronze medal at the Olympics two years ago following a short training stint in Florida, that additional practice time is a welcome change.

"It doesn't matter how good of a basketball player you are individually, to become a team you need more than just a week of training in Jacksonville," LeBron James said.

The Americans looked ahead of schedule, at least defensively, on Thursday in their lone home friendly against Puerto Rico. The US used a 31-2 run spanning halftime to turn a four-point deficit into a blowout, pulling away with a flurry of dunks from James and Dwyane Wade.

There were perhaps a few too many defensive slips in the first 15 minutes—the Americans allowed 26 points in the first quarter—but coach Mike Krzyzewski had stressed this week that his team had plenty of growing to do.

"I think we'll all learn, this is why we play a scrimmage and five exhibitions," Krzyzewski said. "We all, me definitely included, have a learning curve and that's why we're going on this trip, is to be able to learn before we go on Aug. 19." *AP*

Wade wants what Jordan has

LAS VEGAS—DWYANE WADE COULD have brought up his NBA championship ring or the MVP hardware he brought home from the finals. In this company, though, he knew those would do him no good.

At a recent gathering in Chicago, Wade found himself in the presence of Michael Jordan and Gary Payton, a great champion and one of the league's renowned trash talkers. They had something to hold over Wade's head, and they were all too happy to make sure he knew it.

Jordan and Payton both own multiple gold medals. Wade has none.

"I couldn't even say nothing," Wade said. "They're talking about their gold medals and I just put my head down and listened, because I've got to get one first."

So instead of taking the summer to relax after leading the Miami Heat to their first NBA title, Wade will spend the next month in Asia, trying to help the United States win the world championship.

And, in what may have seemed shocking two years ago, so will LeBron James and Carmelo Anthony, who shared the mostly miserable experience with Wade at the 2004 Olympics.

Amare Stoudemire, Shawn Marion and Lamar Odom were the other players who agreed to come back to join the national team, but none are available for the world championship in Japan. Stoudemire and Marion have lingering knee injuries, and Odom pulled out following the death of his infant son.

All remain eligible for spots on the 2008 Olympic team.

By the time the Americans left Athens following three losses, their medal was bronze, and their reputations weren't too shiny, either. Booed overseas, unappreciated at home, and frequently criticized by coach Larry Brown, some vowed they wouldn't play international basketball again.

But along the way, Wade changed his mind. So did his current teammates who were there with him.

"I think before the last game everyone was probably saying, 'I'm not coming back,'" Wade said. "But once we played and won the bronze medal game and saw how fun it was to play together and win, I know us young guys said we'll be back.

"If one comes back, we all come back and that's what we did. Myself, LeBron, Carmelo, Amare, we all came back together."

None of those four was originally supposed to be in Athens. Wade, James and Anthony had just completed their rookie seasons, Stoudemire his second year, and none was older than 22. But when USA Basketball had to scramble to fill out a roster after a number of withdrawals, it turned to a few players who ultimately weren't ready yet.

"First of all, they were replacement players," USA Basketball managing director Jerry Colangelo said. "And they were too young and inexperienced, and they were thrown into an experience where it was just too much."

Accustomed to playing major minutes and winning far more than they lost— nthony and Wade had played in the US college Final Four and James won a high school championship a little more than a year earlier—they became frustrated when neither happened with the usual frequency in Athens. *AP*

Suns extend Barbosa pact

PHOENIX, ARIZONA—THE PHOENIX Suns and Brazilian back-up point guard Leandro Barbosa inked a five-year contract extension on Friday.

Financial terms were not disclosed, but the East Valley Tribune reported Thursday night that Barbosa's deal was worth $32 million.

Barbosa, 23, would have become a free agent after the upcoming 2006-07 National Basketball Association campaign.

He averaged a career-high 13.1 points and shot a scorching 44 percent from the three-point arc last season. He increased his scoring average to 14.2 points in the playoffs.

"We are really excited about keeping Leandro with us," Suns coach and general manager Mike D'Antoni said. "We set out to keep our core together, and LB is certainly a huge part of what we do. He is only going to get better."

Barbosa will continue his usual role as back-up to two-time reigning MVP Steve Nash but also could see time at shooting guard with the second unit, since the Suns added free agent Marcus Banks this offseason. *AFP*

ALONSO REUTERS

Alonso slapped 2-second penalty

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY —Formula One champion Fernando Alonso will be penalized two seconds in qualifying Saturday after being found guilty of "dangerous driving" in practice Friday. Alonso, in the afternoon practice, was involved in an incident. He had a hard time overtaking Red Bull test driver Robert Doornbos at one point and made a hand gesture while passing him. Alonso then appeared to squeeze Doornbos over a bit. Alonso then entered a turn and slowed down, forcing Doornbos to take avoiding action. Also, Alonso was judged to pass a car under the yellow flag when drivers should be cautious. After hearing out both drivers, the stewards decided to penalize Alonso one second in each of the qualifying sessions on Saturday for each offense, making a total of two seconds added on to his time. *AP*

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Sunday BIZ

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Taking a chance on the Philippines

Exec admits to being criticized for putting his money here

By Manuel V. Pangilinan
Chair, PLDT

BUSINESSMEN THE WORLD over are exhibiting a distinct social consciousness, captured in that elegant phrase—corporate social responsibility.

It is also a time when individual philanthropy has never been so fashionable among the rich and famous.

A decade ago, Kazuo Inamori sold his entire equity in Kyoto Ceramics, better known as Kyocera, which he founded. Inamori-san set aside 10 percent for his wife and children, and gave 90 percent to a temple and became a monk.

Bill Gates recently upped the ante by providing an endowment of $31 billion to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

A number of prominent leaders have followed suit—the largest and most prominent being Warren Buffett's donation of an estimated $37 billion to the same Gates Foundation. Apart from committing this immense amount of money in a single transaction—more than anyone else in history—Buffett's generosity was a historic moment in the annals of corporate and individual philanthropy.

More and more, traditional giving is evolving into being more business-like, strategic, well-organized and professionally-managed.

At the time of his donation, Buffett praised the Gates Foundation for "offering the highest probability of achieving goals with global consequences, because the foundation is managed well. I would be terrible if I did it myself."

Yet, the significance of this noble act goes beyond Buffett's generosity, because he has chosen to consign his personal funds to an institution run by someone he trusts, rather than managing them himself. This is entirely antithetical to the personality-driven naming rights opportunities that characterize so many of the big-ticket giving today.

But, more than anything else, this selfless act demonstrated a conviction on the part of both Gates and Buffett, that their vast wealth has given them a broader responsibility to society and, as a corollary, reflects a shared view that the capitalist system, which has enriched them so abundantly, is not capable alone of addressing the root causes of poverty.

Gates confirmed this when he said that "A market system has not worked well for poor people."

Gates and Buffett have therefore demonstrated that business can both be an agent of social change and a source of personal fulfillment.

Track record

We at First Pacific took a chance on the Philippines.

In some respects, First Pacific's investment history in the Philippines reflects a similar persuasion as Gates' and Buffett's. We recognize that business—especially in a developing economy like the Philippines—can and should play a unique part in enhancing overall welfare. Indeed, because of its size and influence, business has the capacity to transform societies—by creating new needs, raising new hopes, inspiring new dreams. That is precisely what establishes the ground for corporate social responsibility.

First Pacific made its first investment in this country 21 years ago, in 1985—when we were just a four-year-old company. That was the Marcos era still, and the Philippines was adrift in heavy seas two years following the assassination of Ninoy Aquino.

This was followed by a string of acquisitions, and has culminated in our most significant investment, in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., in 1998.

PLDT met our stated criteria for investing, and we saw its potential from the beginning. PLDT was the dominant player in its industry, with one of the most recognizable brand in the Philippines. But even before we invested in PLDT, we already had a vision of convergence and its potential.

Indeed, the plan since the start was to join PLDT with Smart and Piltel, uniting three leading fixed line and mobile operators and their networks, people, purchasing and marketing reach.

Our first few years at PLDT were not easy. There were many who raised real questions about our ability and skill to turn around a heavily leveraged, pure landline play. At the same time, the expectations of the new management team were not just returns that were lofty, but returns that were immediate.

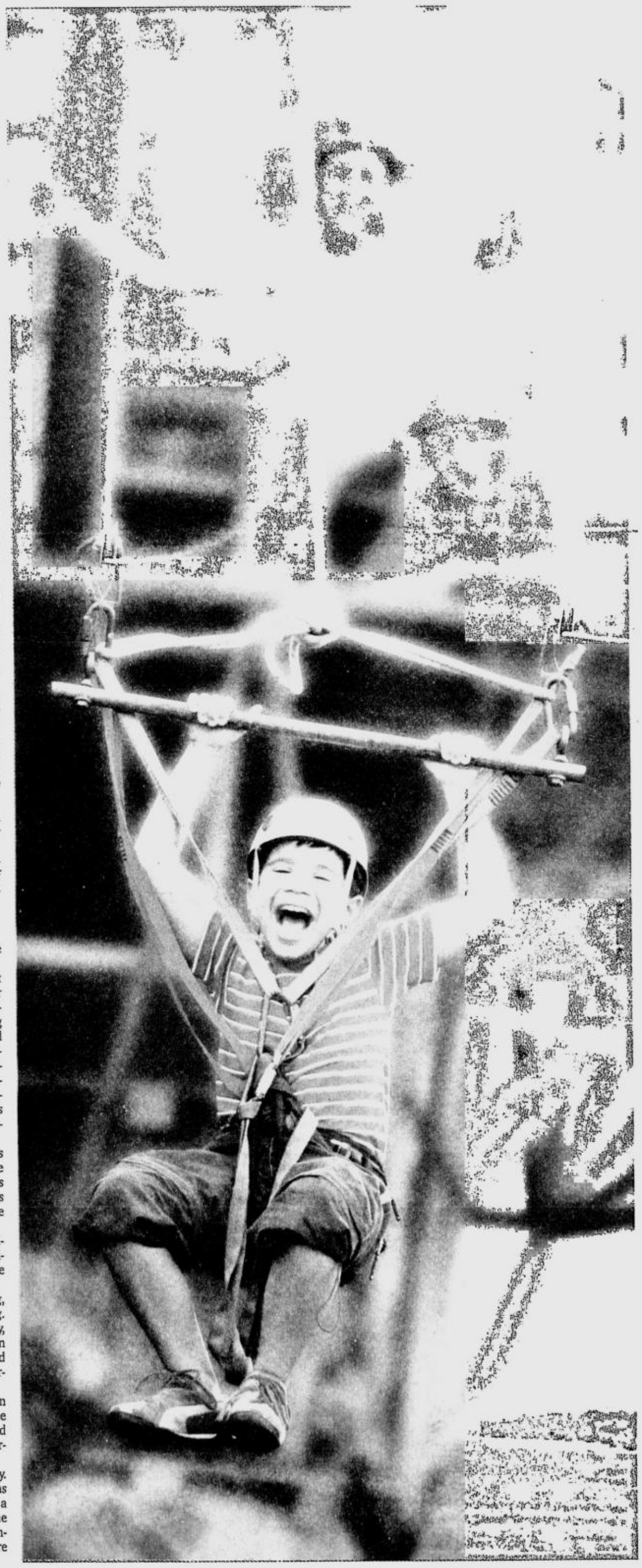
The truth is that our critics had been right. The PLDT of those days was, after all, a company better known for its stoic bureaucracy than for its ability to create value through competition and innovation. We knew that while PLDT met our investment criteria, it lacked First Pacific's DNA and to bring PLDT up to First Pacific's standards, we needed to make changes that were fundamental and pervasive.

Today, PLDT is a total and integrated telecommunications solutions provider with the widest range of convergent assets and affordable services. We're now the most profitable, and most valuable company, in the country—with disclosure and financial reporting that meets, if not exceeds, world-class standards.

Notwithstanding this, we at First Pacific are well aware that the concerns our critics have raised about our initial investment in PLDT also mirror those that investors have about the Philippines. Political instability, legal and regulatory uncertainty, and Peace and Or-

TAKING/ B2

AyalaLand PREMIER



My son could not stop talking about the rush – he plans to make this his regular weekend sport.

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Running amusement place not all about fun and games

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

BEFORE TIMEZONE came on the scene in 1998, amusement centers were synonymous with dark, smoke-filled outlets frequented by young persons with nothing better to do with their time or money.

Eight years later, the amusement centers have become popular hangouts for the family, with games and activities to suit children and their parents as well as groups of friends of all ages.

This was partly because Timezone showed Filipinos a new type of video parlor, one which is well lit, secure and wholesome for the entire family.

But the ride to becoming one of the country's top amusement center chains was not without humps and detours, according to Rafael L. Prats Jr., Timezone president and general manager.

Prats says that in 1999, Timezone, operated by Leisure and Allied Industries Pty of Australia, was down to its last $20,000-budget for new machines.

At that time, Prats says management was torn between buying other machines and spending as much as three-fourths of the budget for the new Dance Dance Revolution machine that tested gamers' skill on the dance floor.

Confident that it knew what its market wanted, Timezone bet its last money on the Dance Revolution machine.

The gamble paid off to the extreme relief of management.

"It was an instant success," Prats says, "people were lining up to try the machine as early as 9:45 in the morning and we open at 10 am."

Prats says the Dance Revolution launched Timezone in a way and saved it from being shut down. It became the biggest game to hit amusement centers, dubbed as "the hottest entertainment machine in the country."

Competition scrambled to get the same machines but production delays resulted in their getting the machines only three months later.

In the meantime, Timezone raked it in, and it never looked back from there.

Prats says it was Timezone's close contact with its customers that saved the day. It gave the company insights into what they wanted, and what Timezone needed to stave off competition.

Timezone, for instance, realized that gamers wanted quick rewards so it introduced the concept of instant prizes.

At Timezone, each game entitles the gamer to a prize, even if it is just a pen or an eraser.

"There was no prize redemption under the old set-up," Prats says, "we came up with a concept where everybody's a winner, even if they just play one game."

This has endeared Timezone to its market, which is almost evenly split between men and women.

During weekdays, young adults looking for a break from the office comprise the bulk of Timezone's visitors. On weekends, it's all about families.

Since 1998, Timezone has expanded into a network of 31 centers and 14 satellite locations across the Philippines.

Timezone has developed different concepts to cater to different markets.

The Classic is the biggest among them with a full line of machines such as the flagship store in Glorietta. The Express is the smallest variant with just a few machines to fit small mall spaces. The Arena, on the other hand, is more oriented toward adults.

TZ Active is the latest concept, and it fuses music and sports in one center to get an even bigger slice of the youth market.

"We have to continue innovating to stay ahead of competition and continue growing," Prats says.

He discloses that Timezone revenues have grown 40 percent in the first five months of the year, and this is just for the old stores.

He attributes it to the growing number of Filipinos who would rather play games rather than spend on other forms of entertainment, such as watching a movie or going to a karaoke bar.

Prats acknowledged that there are other amusement centers that are also aggressively going after the same market. But he said there was still room for growth, especially in the provinces.

"What we plan is to grow the network to 100 stores in five years and strengthen our provincial outlets," Prats says.

It will be no walk in the park, but then Timezone has been through challenges and came out smiling.

Building bridges to community

GLOBE TELECOM, THROUGH its Bridging Communities (BridgeCom) lends a hand to communities in achieving self-sufficiency with its entrepreneurship project, BridgeCom sa Bayan (BSB) in barangays where Globe's over 5,000 cellular sites are located.

Specifically designed for community leaders, BSB is both a leadership and business development training program that encourages communities through their local government leaders to get actively involved in livelihood activities and promote starting small business for families and community welfare.

The said training provides barangay leaders with skills on strategic planning, marketing, and financial management. It also helps leaders identify potential business opportunities appropriate to their communities.

One of the community-based businesses being offered as an additional source of income is Globe Autoload Max, the Company's retail outlet of mobile airtime credit.

Since July 2005 up to the first half of 2006, BSB has already been implemented in over 600 barangays and has provided training to at least 1,500 barangay leaders and 1,000 women entrepreneurs nationwide. For 2006, BridgeCom hopes to reach 200 more barangays on top of the 400 already covered during the first half of the year.

EXPERTS from the Philippine Institute of Traditional and Alternative Health Care demonstrate various product development techniques.

The livelihood training taught participants how to develop local resources for livelihood, including fruit and vegetable processing as well as farming, herbal medicine production, soap production, packaging and marketing.

In its first year alone, Globe BridgeCom sa Bayan has already been recognized, receiving the prestigious Anvil Award and the Gold Quill Award from the Public Relations Society of the Philippines and the International Association of Business Communicators, respectively.

According to Jeffrey Tarayao, Globe's community relations head, the BSB has been a success mainly because of the company's total support to the project. These include the support of Globe Handyphone and the Touch Mobile brands in funding the training programs.

"We have also created a niche in our country as one of the companies that successfully integrated CSR into the Company's core business strategy and the needs of communities," he added

GLOBE's Jones Campos, Bayan Foundation's Client Services' Irma Cosico, Globe's Jeff Tarayao and Turismo Rural Foundation's Julie Vergara

Tarayao also said that their partnership with ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation, is another factor to the success of BSB. "In any enterprise development program like BSB, access to capital is very important," he confirmed. ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation, a microfinance institution, provides capital to barangays who already identified and wanted to start their livelihood projects.

Globe Telecom and ABS-CBN Bayan Foundation has recently formed a partnership with Turismo Rural Foundation, a Cebu-based private entrepreneur group tasked with developing community-based tourism in Southern Cebu. Together, they are helping the barangays in the area to manufacture and market their products with the ultimate goal of making Southern Cebu one of the must visit places in the country.

Jones T. Campos, Globe public relations head, confirmed BSB's plan to develop communities in Southern Cebu. "We hope we can help improve the entrepreneurial skills of the people in smaller communities in the area."

Last June, Globe gave the business development training to 30 barangays in Southern Cebu participated in by over 90 participants.

Globe hopes that this model in Southern Cebu will be replicated in communities in other parts of the country. The BSB training-workshop aims to encourage local communities to be self-sustaining. In this way, Globe is also helping the country move forward.

Taking a chance on the Philippines

From page B1

der. Those same concerns continue to be raised today even as First Pacific considers a new round of fresh investments in this country. But they do point to the question: Why invest in the Philippines?

Despite this rather critical sentiment toward the Philippines, First Pacific's response has been constant and resolute. Yes, we say, there are risks. Yes, we say, there is instability. Yes, we say there is uncertainty. But we say these risks are manageable, and we continue to see enormous potential for growth. We have this perspective because we live and breathe commerce, together with its attendant hazards. We know our markets, and we manage our businesses with mindful and constant attention to prevailing risks.

We have never been, and never will be, just owners of companies. We are managers and value creators. We look at future potential with a patient, long-term view. We work actively with our local managers to secure the means with which to translate that potential into reality. That's why I'm confident that First Pacific can continue to bring into this country inspired thinking to commercial success.

That said, let me also be the first to admit that our investment track record in the Philippines has not been one of unmitigated success. We've had our share of failures, the most notable of which is the Fort Bonifacio Development Project.

As well, I would not be the last to concede that there may have been a trace of altruism—perhaps even a touch of nationalism—in the way we've approached our investments in this country. This is something for which I've been criticized, both here and abroad. I just can't help but think that this bias is only natural for a local boy.

Nonetheless, I must say that the core of our investment decisions—in this country and elsewhere—have always been informed and grounded on sound, strategic fundamentals. In the end, I'd like to believe that reason and sentiment can happily coexist in successful investment decisions.

Economy and its potential

Let me now turn to the broad investment scenario of this country.

Despite the political turmoil, I believe that today's economy is actually different—if not actually better—than it was, one or even two decades ago. And this, in the face of severe fiscal measures, political tempest and external shocks generated by rising oil prices and interest rates.

I hope you agree that a gradual but significant transformation of the economy has occurred—quite unnoticed—thanks to the accrual of incremental reforms instituted by past and present administrations. Recall that, at the time they were being crafted and implemented, these reforms were highly contentious, tentative, and probably thought imperfect even by their sponsors.

Yet, it is these reforms that now inure the economy from a worse crisis than could have arisen. The main lesson to be drawn must be that reforms, when seriously and patiently pursued, do provide their just desserts.

However, we cannot underestimate the magnitude of the tasks ahead of us. A good deal of attention had been focused on political issues, and their resolution. This had been a distraction, but not quite as severe as expected. There is no question that government has given priority to reducing the size of the budget deficit, and the ratio of public debt relative to GDP.

The social cost of addressing this in the short run took the form of a higher tax burden, and reduced government spending, bartering short term pain for long term gain. Implementation of the VAT has strengthened the peso somewhat and improved the perception of our sovereign credit standing.

Infrastructure is a critical bottleneck to economic growth and employment. Private sector participation is probably our best response to enabling new infrastructure investments. Privatization efforts have got to move much faster than planned, particularly in the area of utilities and infrastructure.

If the country were to expand its skilled and trainable manpower—which is where our competitive edge lies—we need to modernize urgently our system of basic education.

At PLDT, we see this deficiency firsthand in our call centers and business process outsourcing operations, where the myth of Filipino English proficiency is shattered. We have to exploit the strength of our telcos so that information technology becomes a source of livelihood and a competitive strength globally for this country.

But I'm glad that agriculture, and the exploitation of our natural resources, are now getting the attention they badly deserve. This is a "Back to Basics" approach after we've failed to jump onboard the industrialization train in the 50's and 60's, and on the export express of the 70's.

We all know that China and India will increasingly require basic commodities for their basic needs—meaning food, metals and materials. We must pursue policies in agriculture and in mining that are economically sound, and not politically convenient.

Land reform for political purposes does not make for true economic reform. We need more flexible agricultural policies that encourage value crops planted in large, commercial farms that are globally competitive because of their economies of scale.

The plantations of Indofood in Indonesia are excellent examples of how commercial farming can form the basis of a world class competitor in raw materials, and a successfully integrated, branded processed food company.

Conclusion

On top of it all, my sense is that we need a new economic blueprint. Towards this end, we have incorporated The Center for National Policy and Strategy Foundation to help flesh out this blueprint. Cnaps, as the foundation shall be called will be launched soonest, and we shall be extending invitations for membership to like-minded Filipinos.

Let me now conclude by recalling Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of the social contract—a contract which says that it is imperative that society's leaders serve the public good, failing which, their own legitimacy can be threatened.

In a similar way, corporate Philippines must adopt an enlightened view of its own role in society. It will no longer do for a company to go quietly about its business, telling no lies and breaking no laws, selling things that people want, and making money.

We should be mindful that today's generation should already have been heirs to two and a half centuries of economic progress since Rousseau proclaimed his social contract. But poverty is here, and could be here for a long time, if we do not do our apportioned tasks within that social contract.

Investment opportunities abound in this country. Investing in those opportunities are indeed part of that social contract. *(Excerpts from a speech delivered by Pangilinan during the Ateneo Graduate School of Business Leadership Forum to mark the 40th anniversary of the Ateneo Graduate School of Business.)*

He gave up copra to sell appliances

METRO PLAZA, OWNED BY Ruben and Cathy Banggayan can be considered a latecomer in the booming appliance retail business.

Ruben used to be in the copra business, but with full implementation of the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) following the lifting of Proclamation 1081 or Martial Law, he saw the "dimming sunset of the copra industry."

Ruben knew that as a business, copra will no longer be a viable one and he set his sights on the appliance retail business. He knew it was a big risk as he was about to venture into the unknown. He knew nothing about the business, but as they say, all successful businessmen are risk takers and he was no exception. His gamble paid off. They now have two appliance stores in Davao with a branch in Gen. Santos City and Zamboanga City. Plans are in the offing for more shops.

Metro Plaza has come a long way from when it opened its doors in 1989, to where it is today. 1989 was the time of the so-called sellers market. He couldn't sell products like GE or Sony. They wouldn't sell to him, even when he offered to pay in cash. Another company, Carrier, agreed to sell to him on a (CBD) cash before delivery. The couple met the challenges head-on and came through with flying colors.

In the ensuing years they expanded their product offerings to include all the name brands in the market. But experience taught them to cut certain brands from their product offerings, particularly if they can't get bigger volumes from such products.

Ruben is not an all-out techie. When he ventured into the business, he didn't know anything about the appliance retail business but he already had a special fondness to new gadgets and gizmos. When he takes a fancy to a new product and buys it, he takes it with him wherever he goes. He was his own walking advertisement. So when friends see him with the new product they inquire about it and consequently they end up buying the product.

The market in the provinces, particularly in Davao, is different from Metro Manila, where the majority of sales in any store or in any mall is through credit cards. In contrast, only 15 percent of buyers use credit cards for department stores and supermarket purchases; and for appliance, less than 10 percent of the buyers use credit cards. Metro Plaza had to resort to in-house financing. This resulted in the creation of their own finance company.

When asked what about the challenges facing Metro Plaza and how they are responding to these challenges, Ruben says the market is being flooded by cheap consumer products from China, and pricing is the name of the game. Hence, they carry product lines intended for the C market. These customers are being cared of by their sales agents. As to those belonging to the upscale market, they usually visit their showroom to view the new items and for their convenience his store has ample parking space.

Metro Plaza has an edge over the Manila based giants because the owner is a Davaoeño. Ruben believes that he would be able to serve them better because he knows the buyers better than the managers running the stores of his competitors. He believes that he has cornered the biggest market share in the appliance business, because he is hands-on. His wife attends to the business daily and if there is any complaint, they immediately take care of it. The people who buy from them, know them. There is a high degree of confidence for a home grown company.

Hard work and dedication to the business are his secrets to his success. He believes that if one comes to the office early and works hard, and if your employees see that you are working hard then they will follow. To unwind from the day-to-day stresses that beset most business executives, he plays golf once in a while. Once in a while too, he goes out with friends on Saturday afternoons and Sundays he spends with his family. He is a devout Catholic.

SAMSUNG Electronics Philippines president Spencer Shim with Cathy and Ruben Bangayan of Metro Plaza

Ruben admits Metro Plaza and Samsung have been on an "on and off" relationship. When he started in his business, there was no Samsung, only LG and other brands. But even then he made sure he carried Korean products because he knew they would eventually keep up with the standards of the other brands. He has been proven right. The Samsung now competes with Sony.

This is the third time when they have resumed partnership with Samsung and this time he hopes the partnership will be for keeps. Ruben says there is a give and take proposition between them. When he asks for something, Samsung immediately provides for that need, so he tries his best to sell more Samsung products.

He sees Samsung's hard work has paid off. Samsung not only worked on marketing through consistent and unification of message but they have equally worked on the back-end, the prestige service.

Metro Plaza carries all Samsung products lines. Ruben notes the quality of Samsung products has improved at such a fast rate, notably their LCD screens—design and technology are present in the product. He says competitive price also lures people. People are patronizing Samsung products for its quality and its price.

Demand for tourism front-liners up

THERE IS A TREMENDOUS DEMAND for well-trained Filipino front-liners in the tourism industry abroad. This was the trend noted by the Hospitality Staff Philippines Inc. (HSPI), an employment agency specializing in this area.

"In the Middle East alone, hundreds of hotels and resorts are being built. These will require thousands of hotel staff. In North America, Australia, New Zealand, England and Ireland, there are many opportunities for Filipinos especially in the housekeeping and cooking fields," said Vic Alcuaz, president and CEO of HSPI.

This demand puts Filipino workers in the limelight since Filipinos are known for their natural gift for making guests comfortable.

Statistics reveal that Filipino hotel executives in the finance, marketing and room management have been excelling all over the world. Filipino bartenders, baristas, and butlers are a favorite not only in hotels but in cruise liners as well. Filipino chefs and cooks are found in kitchens of one-star to seven-star properties.

To supply workers for this huge demand, the country's hotel and restaurant industry have provided training by employing thousands into their establishments at different levels such as CHAMP or the Center for Hospitality Arts Management Philippines.

HSPI recommends students or those who are now hospitality industry workers to equip themselves with a more comprehensive skills-based education. "The school they go to should provide them with sufficient practical training in order for them to have an edge over other applicants," he added.

Alcuaz said the competency-based curriculum of CHAMP—with 70 percent of learning devoted to hands-on training—is an advantage.

Accredited by Tesda, CHAMP offers a one-year Certificate in Hotel and Restaurant Operations, a two-year Diploma Program in Hospitality Management and a Certificate of Competency Abbreviated Course for specific areas of skills namely housekeeping, front office, food and beverage, cooking, barista training, baking and bartending.

CHAMP holds classes at its training hotel, the CHAMP International Hostel in Kamias Road, Quezon City. CHAMPS' tuition fees have been made very cost-effective and lower than existing rates of high-end schools to give a larger number of people equal access to good education.

For inquiries, call 928-2641 and 928-1246.

Management development fora series on Aug. 10

DEFINITELY NOT TO BE MISSED IS THE next of a very interesting series of well-attended fora on management development under the overall title, "The Quest for Innovative Solutions," set on Aug. 10, Thursday, by the Management Association of the Philippines from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at the Conservatory of The Peninsula Manila.

MAP president Evelyn R. Singson and Dr. Nick Poblador, MAP project manager for the fora series, are issuing an invitation to interested parties including middle to top level managers, human resource management (HRM) practitioners, and business school professors and administrators. The overall objective of the series is to review current practices, explore alternative approaches to management and strategy, and evolve more innovative approaches in dealing with issues.

Information on the venues and speakers may be obtained through the MAP secretariat at (632) 751-1149 to 52 or e-mail mapsec@globenet.com.ph. The next of the series run through succeeding Thursdays, Sept. 14 and Nov. 9, from 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. There are varying registration fees for MAP members and their guests and other registrants.

The series topics address concerns of today's managers: "Brave new world of business"; how the traditional approaches to strategy may be unsustainable within the current surge environment.

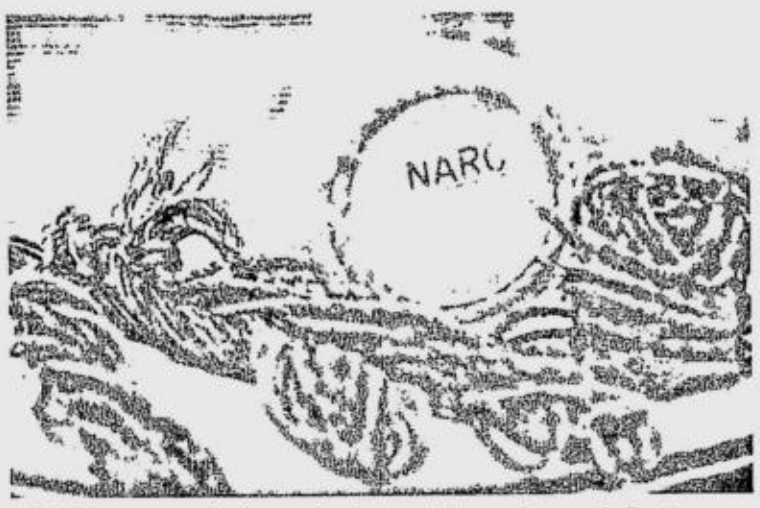
Tapped as speakers and session moderators are Esther Tan of Sun Life of Canada (Philippines) Inc.; Alfredo I. Ayala, CEO of LiveIt University; Carlos E. Ejercito, president and CEO of United Laboratories Group of Companies.

Abaca now in shampoo, money and car parts

From page B4

Gonzal says the cosmetics industry now uses abaca in making soap, shampoo, conditioner, moisturizing cream, lotion and scrub, while a Germany-based luxury car manufacturer uses abaca in the production of some automobile parts.

The country has also been using abaca fiber at a 20/80 abaca-cotton blend in the P500 and P1,000 banknotes as mandated by the Monetary Board and a presidential memorandum dated May 10, 2000.



ABACA ropes on display at the National Abaca Research Center.

VEN LABRO/PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

Many uses

Abaca is likewise used in the manufacture of specialty papers for meat and sausage casing, teabag, cigarette paper, capacitor, stencil paper, and plug wraps as well as cable cords, twines, ropes and marine cordage for naval ships, oil drilling and fishing nets. The handicraft, textile and furniture industries also use abaca.

The abaca growing countries in the world are the Philippines, which has an 84.4 percent share of the production area, Ecuador (12.8 percent), Equatorial New Guinea (1.41 percent), Costa Rica (0.82 percent) and Indonesia (0.57 percent).

Increasing demand

The demand for abaca from abroad has been increasing. From 2001 to 2005 alone, the annual growth rate was 2.5 percent, according to NARC documents.

The major importing countries of raw abaca fibers from the Philippines were the UK (52.5 percent), Japan (36 percent) and the US (5.4 percent). Indonesia, India and China, among others, also buy abaca from the country.

Gonzal says the abaca industry would continue to make a hold in the domestic and international markets, more so that the present supply of quality fibers is not enough to meet the growing demand particularly abroad.

For instance, UK is using abaca as a replacement for asbestos while China needs more abaca fibers for making capacitor paper and for improving cigarette filters and more abaca pulp for making coffee bags.

The viability of abaca as a substitute material for coniferous wood pulp in the global paper market would further boost the demand for abaca, Gonzal says.

However, only about 30 percent of the total fibers produced in the country were sold abroad. The rest were consumed locally by the pulp sector (74 percent), the cordage industry (17 percent), and the fibercraft industry (8 percent).

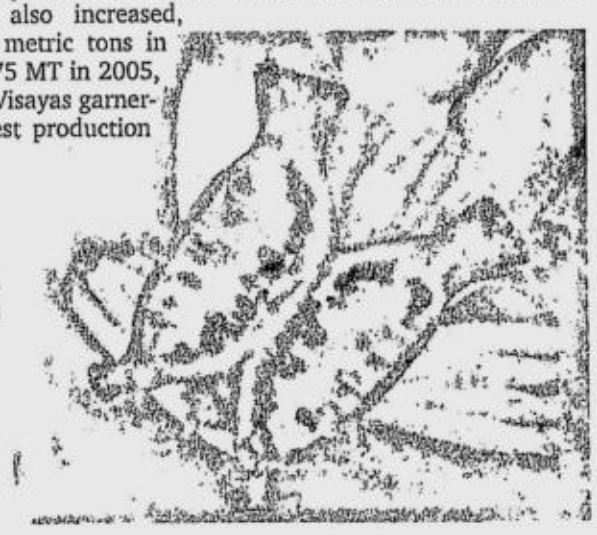
In the country, the area planted to abaca has increased from 121,102 hectares in 2001 to 135,958 ha in 2005. The top five abaca areas in the country as of 2005 were Eastern Visayas (44,953 ha), Bicol (42,832 ha), Southern Mindanao (14,701 ha), Caraga (9.181 ha) and Western Mindanao (7,046 ha).

Abaca fiber production in the country has also increased, from 61,238 metric tons in 2001 to 73,875 MT in 2005, with Eastern Visayas garnering the highest production share (39.4 percent) in 2005. The region also had the highest average buying price of abaca fibers in 2005 at P37.90 per kilo.

Eastern Visayas has more than 24,000 farmers working in 44,953 hectares of abaca plantations.

The region's top abaca producing provinces as of 2005 were Leyte (11,143 ha), Southern Leyte (8,491 ha), Northern Samar (5,804 ha), and Samar (2,625 ha). The bulk of these abaca fibers are used as raw materials for the big pulp mills.

At present, local farmers can sell their abaca to the two pulp mills in Leyte—the Pulp Specialties Phils. located in Barangay Tinag-an of Albuera town and the Specialty Pulp Manufacturing Inc. in Barangay Hilapnitan, Baybay town, with fiber requirements of 15,000 and 7,000 MT per year, respectively.



ABACA seeds

Technical assistance

Local abaca farmers get technical assistance from the Fiber Industry Development Authority (Fida) regional office based in Tacloban City and the NARC in this town.

Gonzal says NARC has been providing technical assistance to abaca farmers not only in Eastern Visayas but also in other regions of the country since the center started its operation in 1987.

The two-story NARC building houses, among others, 14 rooms for the research staff, a training hall, a mini-library, a computer room, a showroom and the office of the director.

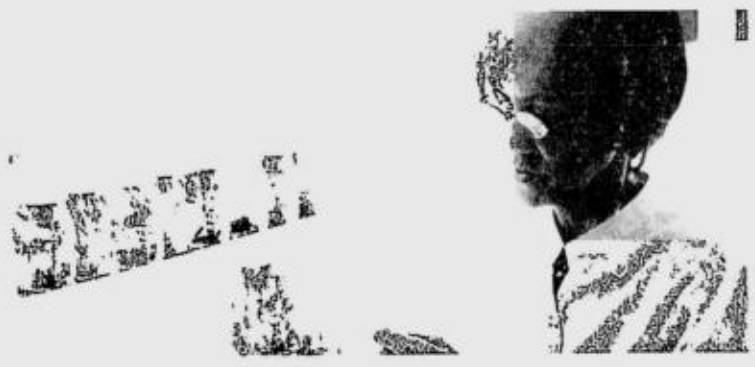
Among the facilities of NARC are a tissue culture laboratory with a capacity of 60,000 plantlets, a disease diagnostic laboratory, a screen house and a fabrication shop. It also has a 3-hectare gene bank, a half-a-hectare demonstration farm, an 8-hectare experimental area, a 2-hectare quarantine area, and a 2-hectare production area.

Gonzal says that in 2005, NARC was able to distribute or sell nearly 6,000 pieces of tissue-cultured plantlets and 1,280 seeds to farmer-cooperatives, farmers and businessmen.

NARC has also fabricated 10 portable abaca-stripping machines last year, which brought to 88 the total number of such machines the center had made. These were aside from the village-level abaca-twisting machine, abaca-twining machine, pulping machine, and hand-made paper dryer, among others, that were also designed and manufactured by the center in past years.

NARC also developed other abaca technologies such as the portable electronic moisture meter, the portable tensile strength meter, and the village-level abaca combing machine.

NARC personnel likewise conducted last year several capability-building activities as well as provide technical assistance on abaca production, site survey and disease identification to thousands of farmers, businessmen and other interested persons.



DR. LELITA R. Gonzal inspects plantlets at the tissue culture laboratory of the National Abaca Research Center at the Leyte State University in Baybay, Leyte.

They also distributed assorted printed materials on abaca products, technologies, stripping machines and disease control. A total of 50 compact discs on abaca bunchy top virus (ABTV) were likewise produced and distributed by the center to abaca farmers.

Threats

Gonzal says diseases like the bunchy top virus continue to threaten the abaca industry in the region that the farmers, experts and concerned local governments, among others, are working hand in hand together to eradicate these diseases.

Among the areas in Eastern Visayas that were badly hit by abaca bunchy top disease is the fifth district of Leyte, which comprises nine towns including Baybay. A survey conducted in July last year showed that the disease-affected area in the district was already more than 9,000 ha.

Gonzal says that 35 of 68 abaca-growing barangays in the fifth district that they inspected last year were infected with ABTV, with the infection ranging from 10 to 90 percent.

To create awareness on the threat, she says NARC personnel have been conducting a massive information drive and actual field demonstration on handling of chemicals, spraying and rouging of infected plants.

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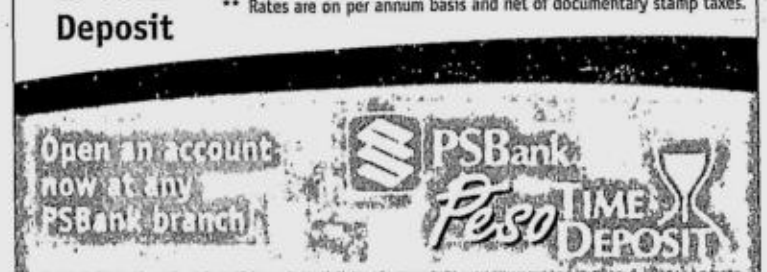

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Sunday BIZ

Abaca now in shampoo, money and car parts

More markets are being discovered for the Manila hemp

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By Vicente S. Labro
Inquirer Visayas Bureau

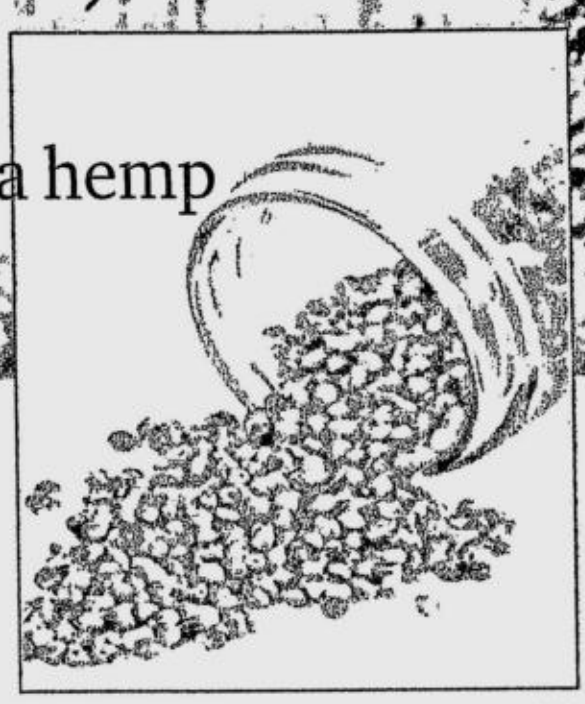
BAYBAY, LEYTE—Prospects remain bright for the abaca industry in Eastern Visayas as new uses of the natural fiber are being discovered and new markets identified.

The indigenous abaca, known worldwide as Manila hemp, is now being used not only in rope making and handicrafts but also in cosmetic products and luxury car parts.

These recent discoveries of various uses of the natural fiber further increased the demand of abaca (Musa textiles Nee), benefiting abaca farmers in the Philippines, the world's top abaca producer and supplier, especially those in Eastern Visayas, the country's number one abaca-producing region.

Dr. Lelita R. Gonzal, executive director of the National Abaca Research Center (NARC) based at the Leyte State University in Baybay, Leyte, says the country's abaca industry supports more than 1.5 million Filipinos and contributes an average of $80.6 million to the country.

ABACA/ B3



A CURTAIN of abaca strands drying by a roadside while above photo shows seeds in a bottle.

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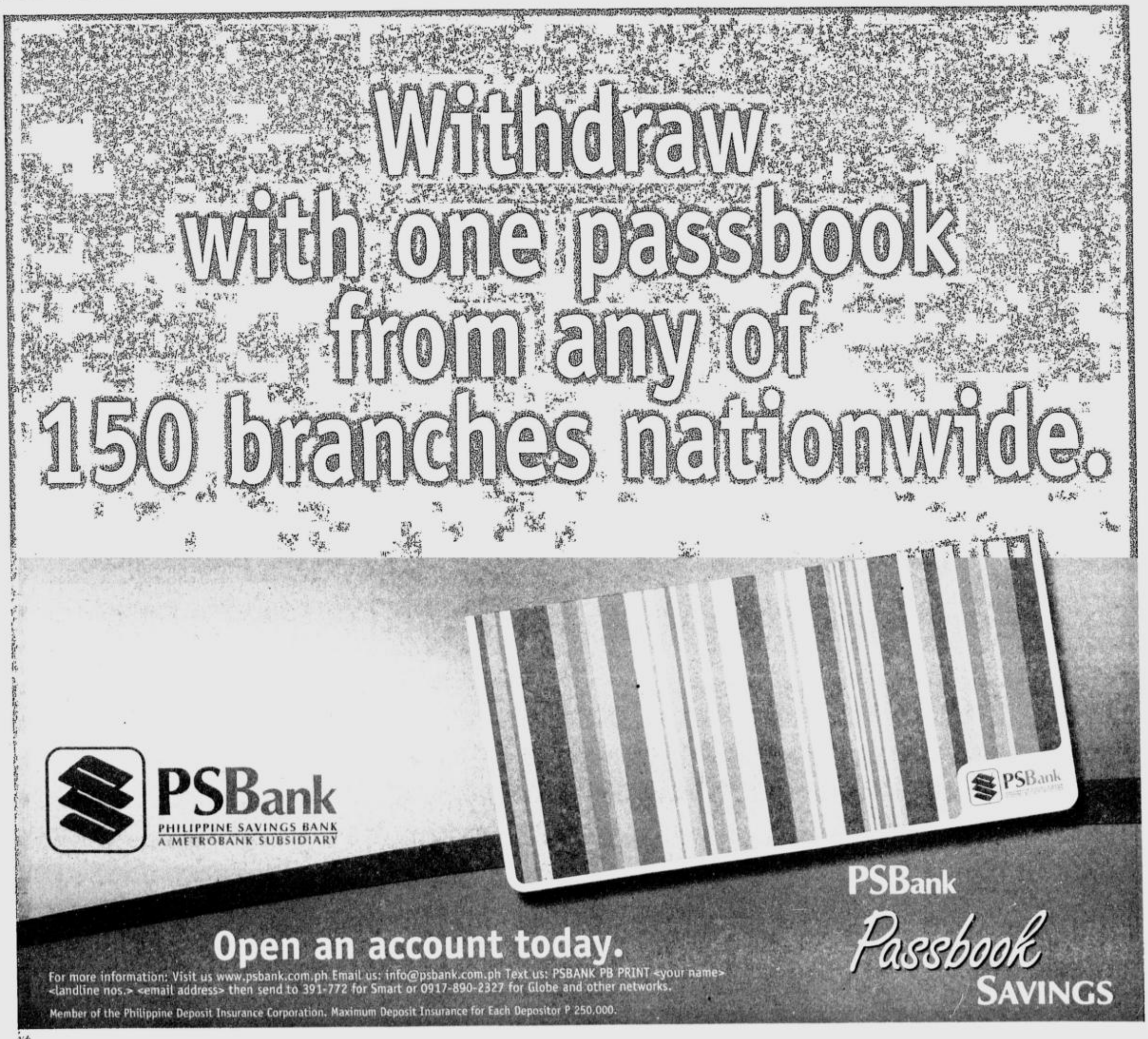

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso

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JOHN GOKONGWEI JR. A taipan turns 80

THE INVITATION TO THE celebration of taipan John Gokongwei's 80th birthday on Aug. 11 shows the silhouette of a boy on a bicycle, a poignant reminder of the days when young John peddled soap, thread and candles on a bike.

PLAYTIME

By the Staff

The eldest of six children orphaned at a young age, Gokongwei put his education on hold and relied on street smarts and a keen instinct for choosing businesses with sure markets to support the family his father left behind. But he made sure he had time for reading and for dreaming, two ingredients of his success of which he was never in short supply.

At 19, Gokongwei put up his own company, importing textile remnants and old clothing from the United States, pioneering so to speak the *ukay-ukay* business in the country. At 30, he turned his attention to food manufacturing and thus was born Universal Robina Corporation.

His growing empire, eventually to be known as JG Summit, soon branched out to land-development (hotels, malls, offices, housing, condominiums and mixed-use), telecommunications, textiles, banking, petrochemical, airline and publishing—in all, 22 business units providing products and services which are leaders on the market.

Considering he started pedaling toward taipan-hood at age 15, it has been a busy 65 years for Mr. John, despite his "soft retirement" five years ago.

While most people his age spend their time reminiscing about the past, Gokongwei is busy plotting his next moves.

"I'm going into philanthropy," he says. "I'm shifting." And so it seems the prime of Mr. John has just begun.

What's the secret of your youthful look?

I don't know. Keep working. (Laughs) When I was on a ship last month in the Baltic, most of the Americans and Europeans looked 60, but the Orientals didn't have wrinkles. *Sila* 50 *lang*, *wala na*, bald *na*. I still have a full head of hair.

Do you work out?

I do every day. I walk on my treadmill, that's 30 minutes; then I swim 20 laps. Takes me about 20 minutes a day.

No vices?

I don't drink. I don't smoke. I used to drink half a bottle 20 years ago. On average, I drank a fourth of a bottle. I drank scotch or gin. Every day, one-fourth bottle. But I stopped 20 years ago when Benigno Aquino was shot.

Why?

I was shocked. I didn't drink and I didn't smoke. So the next day, my wife said, "O, you didn't smoke the whole day." So I just stopped.

Cold turkey, just like that?

I just stopped. I'm glad I did because if I didn't stop I think I'd be dead by now... You know, when I'm on a trip, I take beer.

How about red wine?

No, I'm allergic. I have a problem with stomach acidity.

How about white wine?

A little, but not too much.

Do you drink coffee?

I take a lot of coffee but decaf.

Does Great Taste have decaf?

No. (Laughter) At least I tell the truth. (Laughter) I have to take decaf because if I drink more than two cups I can't sleep the whole night.

So why isn't Great Taste making decaf coffee?

Decaf has a very limited market. You have to spend *siguro* P200 million just to build a plant. Maybe even more. Please try our doughnuts. They are very good.

How is your health? Any health problems?

Big health problems, no. Small health problems, yes. I have a lot of uric acid.

But it's not serious enough for you to stop trying your products?

No. I eat anything. In fact I like to eat *chicharon*. My wife doesn't like me to eat it, but I eat it when she's not around. (Laughter)

Which of your achievements are you proudest of?

Having a nice family—I think that's my best achievement. I have children who are all very responsible. They're all okay.

Are they all involved in the business?

Yeah, all.

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Gateway Mall Araneta Center (912-8114 / 912-8339) • SM City North Edsa (927-7560/61)

Rustan Marketing Specialists, Inc. (RMSI) is the official franchisee of Marks & Spencer in the Philippines

Per DTI-NCR Permit No.2300 Series of 2006

A taipan turns 80

From page C1

How did you know which part of the business to give to them?

Oh, no, they did the picking themselves. Like Lisa, she wanted to be a publisher... They pick what they want. I always tell them, "Do anything you want as long as you excel." Lisa, Robina and Lance, they picked what they wanted. The three younger ones are still doing merchandising but, you know, I think they'll have to move from there. I mean, Robina was in publishing, but she's head of the whole retail group now. The retail group is our second-biggest business now.

That includes the department store and what else?

Ministop, department store, supermarket and then, what else, Do It Yourself.

How about the boutiques like Dorothy Perkins?

That's all under her. I think we've got a new one again.

Toys 'R' Us?

No, not Toys 'R' Us. It's for ladies.

Ah, Wallis in Shangri-La Mall?

Right, Wallis.

Do you still micromanage?

Everybody says I micromanage. I'm like a housewife. I look at everything. I have managers, though. I think we have 10 or 20 professionals who are doing very well. All our BUs [business units] are run by professionals except for two. One is her [referring to niece Patricia] brother [Vincent, son of his brother Henry] and the other one is Bobby [son of his deceased brother Johnson]. And the professionals, some of them are pretty good, very good.

Who hired them? Did you pick them?

Some are homegrown; the rest are from the outside.

How do you instill discipline among your children since you cannot let go of them if they don't do well?

I don't discipline them. I think they're more disciplined than me. (Laughter)

How did that happen?

I don't know. (Laughter) All six of them are very disciplined.

Thanks to Elizabeth [his wife]?

Yeah, I think Elizabeth has something to do with it. But I think maybe it's also the environment. They're very good kids.

Did any of your children try to work somewhere else?

No, they're all in the business. Except Lisa. When she was in the US, she wanted to stay for three years. I was worried she would marry an American there. (Laughter) So I told her, "You come home." Better you're all here. (Laughter) So she came home. She worked with the telecom/telephone company for a year. Then one day she said, "Dad, I wanna do something else." What? "I wanna publish magazines." Are you sure? Are you serious? That's a very difficult field, but go ahead. I let them do what they want.

Of the Chinese traditions you've been born into, which ones have you kept?

The best Chinese tradition is filial ties. That means love your parents, your grandparents, you know. This is, I think, the most important thing. You take care of the old. And the rest are education, humility, but the most important one is you're supposed to be loyal to the family... That's why when I go to the US and I see the old people, I feel sad.

What qualities do you look for in people you hire?

The most important to me is integrity. After that, of course, ability, and knowing how to mix with other people, because, you know, these people, once they become BU managers, they're running a corporation bigger than most corporations in the Philippines. Just one, like Robinsons Land, you know, it's bigger than most... or URC [Universal Robina Corp.] So, you have to have people who have integrity, ability, also people who can work with others. There are some people who are very good but they cannot work with others. People who work hard—that is the criterion for top people. For the lower ranks, we have different criteria.

What do you demand of your employees? Do you demand loyalty, for instance?

That one, definitely, yeah, if you're working for me. But if you resign, what can I do? If you are working for me, you had better be loyal.

What are the biggest challenges facing all your businesses right now?

If the political climate doesn't change, it's okay [because] we could manage to grow the business well. But any big changes in the environment can affect the course of our business. Secondly, I think, manpower. Getting good people is very difficult. A lot of people are immigrating. We lost a lot of pilots in our airlines. We lost a lot of engineers in the petrochemical plant. They were people who had been trained.

You train your own engineers, right?

Yes, but then they leave for the Middle East. Maybe now, [given the situation] in the Middle East, they'll come back. (Laughter) They're very good people. But in the Middle East they're paid four times more, so what can you do? How can you compete?

Those who've chosen to stay, why do you think they've stayed?

I think, first, they love the country. They want to stay here. Their families are also here.

Did you have to entice them with bigger bonuses and salaries?

The good ones are always given a big bonus at the end of the year. Sometimes they get up to six months [bonus]. But not many are that good to get that kind of bonus. (Laughter)

C2 is one of your successes.

This product is very successful. I went to China. We have a plant there and I visit China quite often. I saw people drinking this and I checked around and I noticed this was outselling Coca-Cola in some areas. So I looked at the statements and this fellow from Taiwan was No. 1. The biggest beverage-makers in China are from Taiwan. So I made a study. We came up with one line and in three months we were going to be short. So we ordered six more lines. That's what we have now, six lines.

Do you use, or at least try, your products?

Every product we make, I try.

What's your favorite among your products?

I like Nova.

How about candy?

I like Dynamite. But I don't like to eat too much candy, you know, because my sugar is borderline, 120, 130.

Which of your restaurants do you like best?

You know, I like Mr. Choi's Kitchen. We have now six branches.

All in the Robinsons malls?

No, four in Robinsons, one in Abenson and one in Caloocan, in Gotesco.

Why do you think the Chinese are so good in business?

It has nothing to do with being Chinese. Well, basically the Chinese are like the Jews. They immigrated. The Jews went to the West, the Chinese came here, went to Thailand, Indonesia, all over Asia.

When you go to a foreign country and you're an immigrant, you have no land, no money—nothing. So what do you do? You become a peddler or a stall-keeper. I think if you look at all the big companies formed here, they've all been formed by immigrants. I would say 99 percent by immigrants. But after a while, by the second or third generation, *nawawala naman*. My great grandfather was the wealthiest man in Cebu in the 1920s, but by 1940 there was not much left. It's like water, it flows, like the tide.

Are you more Chinese or more Filipino?

What do you mean by more Chinese or more Pinoy? I think it should not be whether you are more Chinese or more Pinoy, but whether you're ... it depends on your philosophy. You might think you're Filipino, but what is Filipino culture? What is it? Can you tell me? What is Chinese culture? But you can tell a Rightist from a Leftist. Do you believe in free enterprise, democracy?

SUN CELLULAR
Everything Important is Under the Sun
Wasn't it a big risk to come out with Sun and go up against two giants?
I love risks, but you have to have equation of risk and reward. If the reward is there, you won't mind the risk

So it's not about race, it's more about beliefs.

I think it's more of the beliefs. What is race, anyway? If you trace the history of the Philippines, all the great heroes have Chinese blood, including José Rizal, Andres Bonifacio, Emilio Aguinaldo. Sergio Osmeña, Cardinal Sin, all of these people. It's a belief *kasi* that if you're Chinese, you're good in business. That's one of the things that people think immediately.

As I've explained, immigrants, when they come here, really have nothing. So what can they do except work hard? But if you were born here, the worst that you can have are a few bananas and coconut trees. You won't starve, really, if you stay in the provinces. And most of the Chinese who immigrated here were peasants and farmers. There were no wealthy guys.

You know, Lee Kwan Yew, when I attended a seminar, he was telling the Chinese leaders in China, "Don't tell me you cannot beat us. Singapore was founded by peasants and farmers and fugitives while China [had] all the intellectuals. The rich people stayed in China. You should do a better job than Singapore." And everybody clapped their hands... Well, Singapore, if you trace the history, a hundred years ago it was really nothing. It was a barren rock.

How do you see the new generation of entrepreneurs, the likes of Ben Chan and the owners of Abenson and [other companies]?

I think they're doing a good job. But I think our entrepreneurs are not as daring as those in Thailand or Malaysia. I don't know what you would call it but, if you take a look at their economy, they're better entrepreneurs than us, I think. They're pretty good, especially the ones in Thailand.

To what can you attribute our lack of entrepreneurial flair. Could it have something to do with our political [climate]?

I don't know. A lot of people say it may be because we were under Spanish or American rule or because we're the only Catholic country. So many reasons. Could it be the political climate? But the political climate has been going on for, what, 60 years? Independence was '46.

What distinguishes a Gokongwei business from the others?

Well, we started as a one-man show. That's me. We have tried to keep the characteristics of that one-man show. I mean, we have frugality and all the usual things. But one point I think I have and most of our execs have is we can see what's happening and we take a position right away.

If you notice, we take positions in every area. We're always No. 1 or No. 2. I think that it's very important for entrepreneurs to see where the wind is blowing and what areas you can go into. And then you decide to put your resources there and, as I've said, you have to have the stomach for it because you are not able to sleep nights.

What sets a Gokongwei airline apart from other airlines or a Gokongwei mall from other malls?

It's not a Gokongwei factor. Like the airlines (Cebu Pacific)—we provide a no-frills airline, point to point, always on time. And now we have one thing that other airlines don't have. We will be the first one with all brand-new airplanes (Airbus) by the end of the year. So that's one advantage. I think we'll get half the market.

Now, our malls, we're not as many as Shoemart but we're getting there. Shoemart took 60 years to reach its level. We only started in '85, so we're only 20 years old. Maybe '83. We have now 19 malls. We're about half the size of Shoemart and it took us only 20 years. It took them 60 years. I'm not saying they're not good... (Laughter)

What about real estate or land development?

The same, 1980-something was when we started. In malls, we're No. 2 now. In development, in condominiums, we're doing very well. People like to buy into our buildings because we deliver. Our buildings, the quality and time schedule, we deliver.

What about promotions of arts and culture? For example, the other malls have galleries.

Well, the promotion of arts and culture doesn't have to be done through a mall. There are many things you can do. You can contribute money to the schools. We've given about P400 million... to ICA (Immaculate Conception Academy), Xavier, La Salle, Ateneo (the John Gokongwei School of Management). The engineering sch (Technical Training Center in Rosario, Pasig) also.

What happened to your Children's Library?

It's still going on.

These contributions are all under the Gokongwei Brothers Foundation?

Yes, because the foundation was created to help education in the Philippines.

How about your contribution to the protection of the environment?

All our plants have been proven to be environment-friendly. I think that is another achievement.

Which business is closest to your heart and why?

I started with food, that's why I like Nova. (Laughter) And that's still our biggest business. Then retail is No. 2. Real estate is No. 3.

Are all your brands making money? If there are brands not making money, do you let go of them?

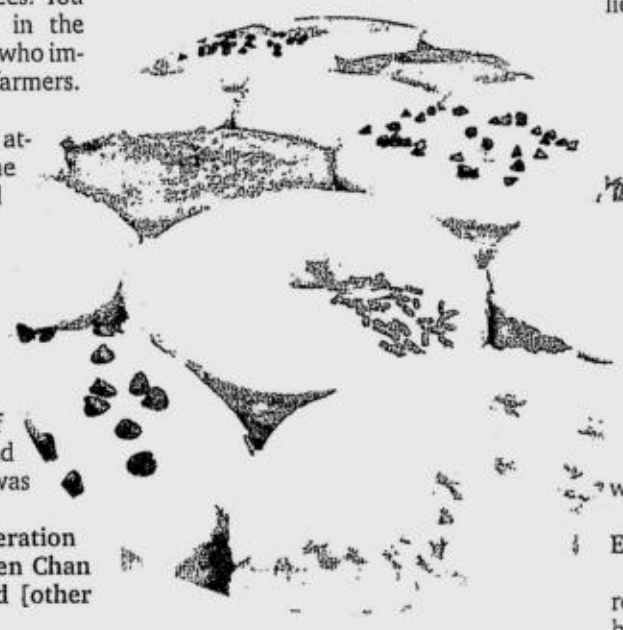
If we don't become No. 2 or No. 1, we drop the product, just like the ice cream. There's no more Presto ice cream. We were No. 3, No. 4, so we decided [to pull it out].

So it's not good enough for you to be No. 3. Are you still No. 1 in fun snacks?

Yeah, we're No. 1 in fun snacks, chocolates, candies.

One of your first-biggest success stories was Blend 45 coffee. What happened to that?

It's still doing very well, Great Taste and Blend 45. We're No. 2 in coffee, next to Nestlé.



Please try our doughnuts. They are very good

So what's the No. 1 snack?

Jack n' Jill.

Which variant?

Chippy, Chippy, Nova, Piatos.

Do you think the generation of your children have it easier, now that the business has been set up, compared to your time?

It's different, you know. We had to struggle in a different way but the second generation, in order to prove themselves, have to work real hard to keep the momentum, because they're gonna be judged also.

Aren't you afraid the third generation might lose it, as the saying goes?

That's always everybody's fear. (Laughter)

How do you ensure that they don't?

There's no way you can ensure that. You just make sure that your second generation will take their job seriously and... teach the same discipline to the third generation. But you never can ensure. It's hard.

What is the most difficult decision you've had to make, business-wise?

None, it's all the same. Oh, one of the most difficult was when I wanted to buy PLDT. That's when I bought already from [Anthoni] Salim, but he could not get the approval here.

Wasn't it a big risk to come out with Sun and go up against two giants?

I love risks, but you have to have equation of risk and reward. If the reward is there, you won't mind the risk.

You came out with the first no-limit...

...24/7. Now everybody wants free SMS. We have some other things coming out.

Like what?

I can't say. (Laughter) If I tell you *wala na*, tomorrow [it's the] headline.

What was your biggest mistake, business-wise?

There have been mistakes, but not really big mistakes. We have a rule of thumb which is very good. We cannot invest more than 15 percent in any project however profitable it is. So, on that basis, if one company goes broke, you lose only 15 percent.

Are you friends with any of your competitors?

I'm friends with Lucio Tan, with Henry Sy, everybody. We're friends but we still compete.

And the Zobels?

The only thing we're competing in is malls.

What's your favorite among your products?
I like Nova

How about telecommunication have Globe, you have Sun.

Ah, yeah, Globe. I forgot about (Laughter)

Who do you admire among you petitors?

In Manila? I don't know. Amo nessmen abroad, Li Ka-Shing, th from Hong Kong. I think he's the m gressive businessman in Asia, ex Japan. He owns this thing of Shoem

Watsons?

Watsons. He owns, I think, 1,50 all over. He owns the biggest real Hong Kong, and he's the richest Asia. But if you say admiration, I ad Kwan Yew more.

What is the best attribute if yo to succeed in business? Should shrewd, for example?

You can be shrewd even if you a fessor. If you're a husband telling y lies, you're shrewd. Shrewd is not rect word. They use that but I business, first, you have to lov ond, you have to be really And third, you have to ha capital.

When I started I didn't ha tal. It was easy during the w needed a bicycle. But now, that easy to start from zero. the war it was easier, I think. ody was practically equal. We ke. I was 15 when I started w . You didn't need money then.

ow, 15, that's young! You mis a lot of fun years.

No, I had fun also. (Laughter) what fun can you have?

This was, of course, before y Elizabeth.

Oh, no, that was different. That ready in the 1950s. I was 26, 27. I her for five years, a long time. And in the (United) States, so, you kno to fly there every Christmas. It was ficult to call. I had to go downtow wireless or whatever or cable. You place a call there and you have to w an hour to one hour.

That must be love.

I guess so. (Laughter)

At what time did you have to m calls?

About 8 or 9 a.m. But it was very make a call.

When was that?

1954. I started calling her '53.

How did you two meet?

We were neighbors in Cebu. And went to the US to study.

Were you childhood sweetheart

No. (Laughter)

That was a quick answer!

But I said, "Hey, that's the one fo I courted her. I was 27, she was 20.

Oh my, seven years age differen

What's wrong with seven years? ter) The woman ages faster. (Laugh

Did she know you had already d she was the one for you?

No. I decided that she was the o tried hard.

Were you always faithful to her

That's a difficult question. (Laugh

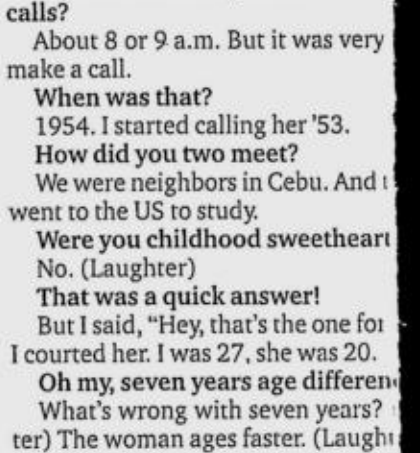
Do you get to choose any of t that get into FHM or the calendar?

No, I have nothing to do wi (Laughter) You know, Lisa is very i dent.

You don't even get to nominate the girls?

No. Lisa is different. She's very i dent. I asked her, "Ly, can you se girls at my party?" She said, "No said, "Why?" She said, "We don't do

Can you imagine? Saying no to



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You're the tallest among the brothers? I'm the tallest, yeah.
You're the tallest among the taipans? Yeah, I think I'm the tallest.
You're taller than Lance? Ah, yes. Lance is, I think, 5'9" or 5'10".
Larger than... (Laughter) I look larger, yes (Laughter)

Yeah. (Laughter)

When FHM first came out, it was controversial.

Oh, yeah. A lot of people were against it but, you know, I said the Philippines is the only country that would not print it. Even Indonesia is printing it, you know. And they're Muslim. Even Malaysia... There is one magazine that comes out against FHM but they're not doing too well... I think we're the biggest now. We have 25 magazines now.

And which is your best-selling magazine?

FHM, I think. Cosmo, Preview... Yes! Magazine.

The entertainment magazines. *Sa inyo rin 'yung mga* OK? Lisa is so aggressive about getting these titles.

Lisa is doing all the work. She does it well.

Does she also get a big bonus in a red envelope at the end of the year?

I don't know. That's under Lance.

So you don't have a say on the bonuses?

Depends on what level. The top ones are decided by the execom.

What particular business are you handling right now?

I am the chairman emeritus. I attend Friday meetings full-blast from 2-8 p.m. As I've said, I'm like the housewife who snoops around but I don't have to go. I just call them, "Hey..."

And if you find something wrong, what do you do?

I have to pass through the channels. I look at things but I cannot do something directly. I can't say, "Something's wrong with you." I tell Lance or James. They are the ones to discipline these people.

What's your management style?

It depends. Before, as I've said, I was a one-man army. Now 90 percent of the time it's James and Lance running it.

Were you a flexible manager?

Now I'm no longer a manager. But before I was very flexible.

What did you do to subordinates who made mistakes, for example?

Well, most of the people who worked for me are still around so I must have allowed them to make mistakes... otherwise most of them would have been fired. People will always make mistakes, you know. No matter how good you are, you're liable to make mistakes. There's no such thing as a perfect manager or anything.

Can you text?

I call. I can text but slowly.

But why text if you're using Sun? You can call anytime. (Laughter)

Yes, I call. I don't text.

Can you use a computer?

I use the computer. In fact, I use it every day.

What kind of music do you listen to?

I like the classical, like Beethoven. You know, I had five years of piano when I was young. Then my father died, no more money, so I stopped.

Do you still play the piano?

No more. My grandson is very good. Justin [son of his daughter Robina] is a good golfer, a good swimmer, and he's very good in music. He can play from memory.

What if your grandkids refuse to go into the family business?

I don't really care what they do as long as they're good at what they're doing. They can be engineers, lawyers, doctors, politicians, anything—as long as they're good at it. You cannot stop them from doing things that they like.

How tall are you?

5'11".

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Ah, yes. Lance is, I think, 5'10" or 5'9".

Larger than... (Laughter)

I look larger, yes. (Laughter)

You said earlier that you love traveling. What is your favorite place to visit?

I used to like Geneva, San Francisco and New York. Now I like Shanghai. Maybe Eastern Europe, but I like Shanghai. That city is very cosmopolitan. You can find everything you want at half the price.

Do you still have a night life?

Not much. Not here. (Laughter)

In Shanghai? (Laughter)

I don't go out here.

Where then?

When I go to Shanghai, I go out. I go with Tony Go, my friend.

Do you gamble?

I used to gamble before. I used to gamble up to midnight, even 3 a.m. at the Boulevard [Roxas]. Then I decided, hey, I better stop this nonsense.

What was your game?

Black Jack.

Did it affect the business?

That was why I decided to stop.

Whenever you decide to stop something, you quit just like that.

Exactly. Smoking, drinking, gambling.

Do you and your wife watch in your movie theaters?

We don't have a movie theater. My daughter has.

I mean Robinsons.

Ah, we go every Sunday, once a week.

What kind of movies do you like?

I like historical or detective.

What was the last movie you saw? "Superman"?

"Superman," yeah.

When was the last time you visited your birthplace?

Fujian? I went to visit my grandfather's grave in '89, I think. You know, it's funny... the old people before, they knew when they were gonna die. My great grandfather, my grandfathers from both sides, they went home and in six months they were dead. But now no more. Nobody goes to China to die anymore.

Your father died here?

My father, my uncle, they all died here but during my great grandfather's time, in the 1920s, everybody went home to die there.

(Patricia): But your father didn't have a choice. He got typhoid.

But still he wanted to die there. Even grandpa did. That's a big difference. Now they stay here and die here.

Maybe because to them this is home?

Yeah, that's right. Before, the old folks really wanted to go home and die there .

Wasn't it very difficult to travel back then?

It took about three weeks. Now I'm always telling my people, in 1½ hour I'm in Xiamen, just like going to Davao. Have you been to Xiamen? Beautiful place. We'll [Cebu Pacific] be flying to Beijing in October.

Where was your father buried?

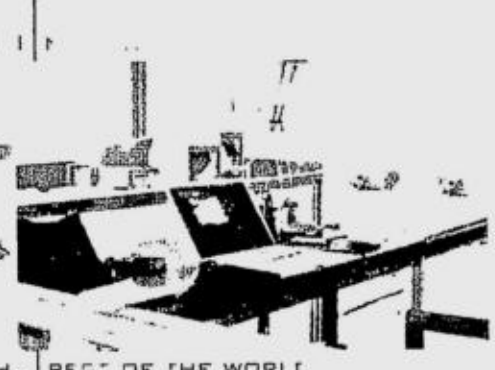
My father's buried in Cebu. My mother left

A TAIPAN/ C4

This product is very successful. I went to China... I saw people drinking this and I checked around and I noticed this was outselling Coca-Cola in some areas.

AyalaLandPREMIER

LIVE IN A
SPACE AND IT'S JUST HOW I


WHERE I AM NEVER JU OUCH WITH H.. PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

UNIVERSE
E EL DURING LEISURELY MOMENTS BY THE POO

AND WHERE I C ENJOY THE MOST PEACEFUL NIGHTS WITHOU WORRIES.
OF HIGH LIFE.
IT' SURPRISE THAT MY FRIENDS ARE OR A DRINK AT M PLACE

AF TER OUT FOR AN EVENING WALK KNOW THIS S HOW IFE HOULD BE.

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I look larger, yes. (Laughter)

You said earlier that you love traveling. What is your favorite place to visit?

I used to like Geneva, San Francisco and New York. Now I like Shanghai. Maybe Eastern Europe, but I like Shanghai. That city is very cosmopolitan. You can find everything you want at half the price.

Do you still have a night life?

Not much. Not here. (Laughter)

In Shanghai? (Laughter)

I don't go out here.

Where then?

When I go to Shanghai, I go out. I go with Tony Go, my friend.

Do you gamble?

I used to gamble before. I used to gamble up to midnight, even 3 a.m. at the Boulevard [Roxas]. Then I decided, hey, I better stop this nonsense.

What was your game?

Black Jack.

Did it affect the business?

That was why I decided to stop.

Whenever you decide to stop something, you quit just like that.

Exactly. Smoking, drinking, gambling.

Do you and your wife watch in your movie theaters?

We don't have a movie theater. My daughter has.

I mean Robinsons.

Ah, we go every Sunday, once a week.

What kind of movies do you like?

I like historical or detective.

What was the last movie you saw? "Superman"?

"Superman," yeah.

When was the last time you visited your birthplace?

Fujian? I went to visit my grandfather's grave in '89, I think. You know, it's funny... the old people before, they knew when they were gonna die. My great grandfather, my grandfathers from both sides, they went home and in six months they were dead. But now no more. Nobody goes to China to die anymore.

Your father died here?

My father, my uncle, they all died here but during my great grandfather's time, in the 1920s, everybody went home to die there.

(Patricia): But your father didn't have a choice. He got typhoid.

But still he wanted to die there. Even grandpa did. That's a big difference. Now they stay here and die here.

Maybe because to them this is home?

Yeah, that's right. Before, the old folks really wanted to go home and die there .

Wasn't it very difficult to travel back then?

It took about three weeks. Now I'm always telling my people, in 1½ hour I'm in Xiamen, just like going to Davao. Have you been to Xiamen? Beautiful place. We'll [Cebu Pacific] be flying to Beijing in October.

Where was your father buried?

My father's buried in Cebu. My mother left

A TAIPAN/ C4

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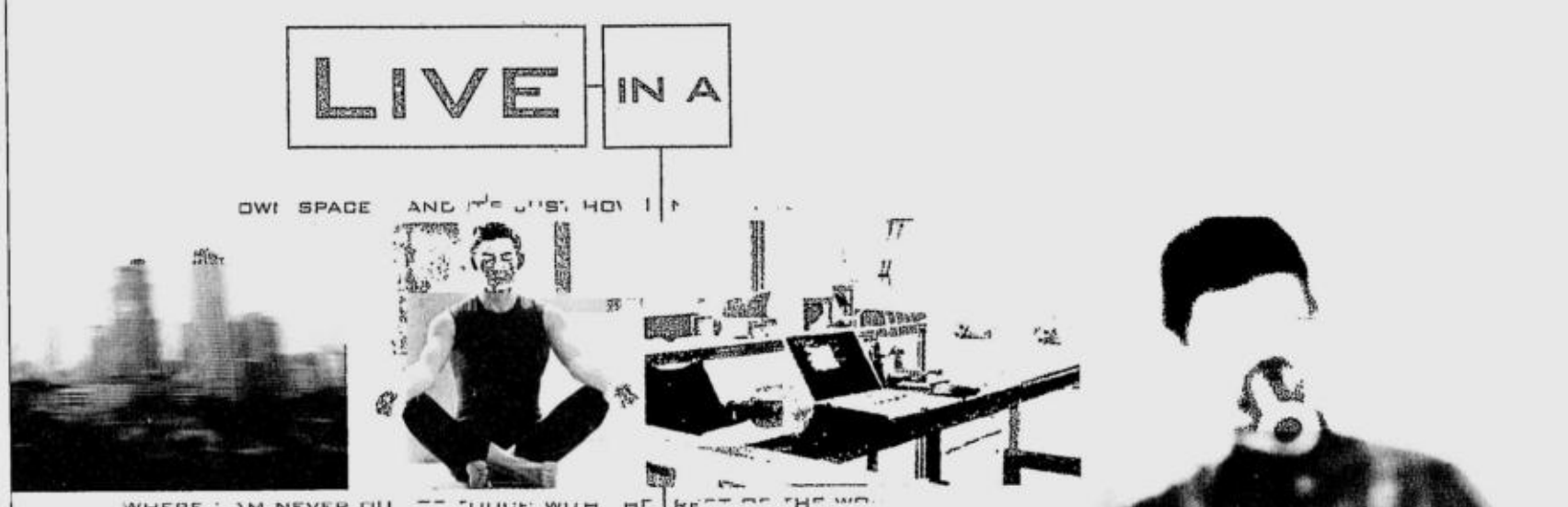

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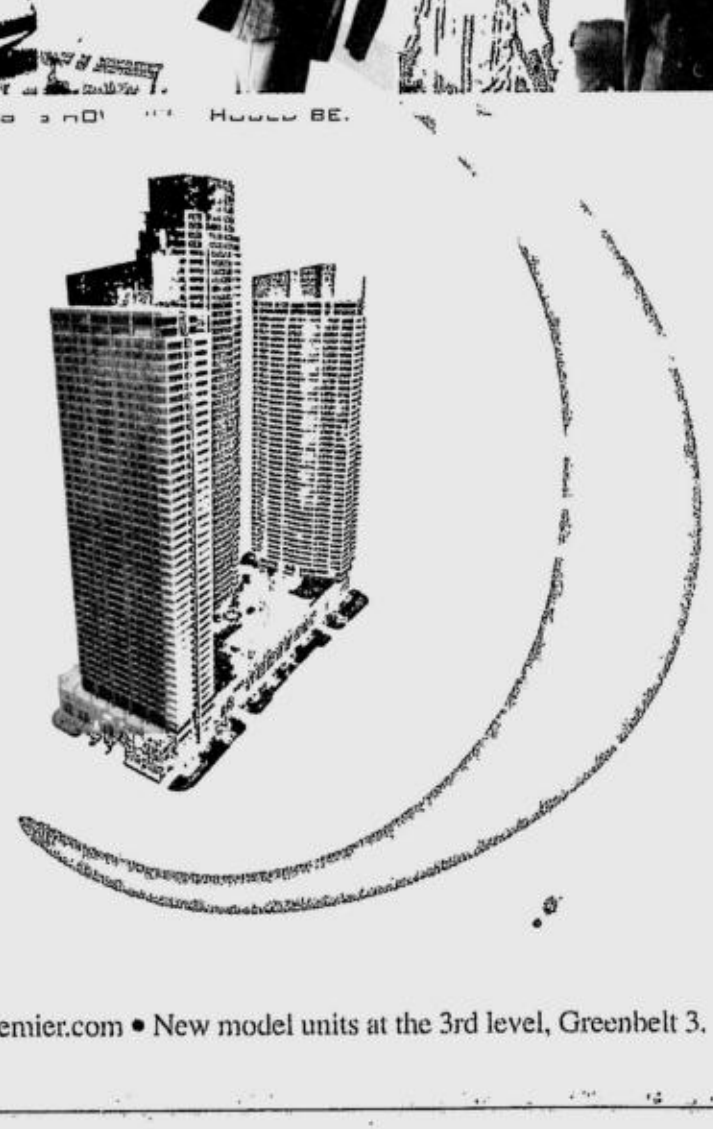

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

A taipan turns 80

From page C3

word that he should not be disturbed because we have been blessed by God. We have been very lucky, the family, for the last 30, 40 years. She said you should not remove your father. That place is turning into a dump, but what can you do? That's what my mother's instructions. I wanted to move him to the mausoleum but that was her last instruction. Don't move him since God has been good to us, so don't tempt the gods.

Do you still go to Cebu?

Not very often.

You still have a sister there.

Yes, Lily.

You can still speak Cebuano.

I speak perfect Cebuano. I can even make a speech in Cebuano. But I'm not good in Tagalog.

How about your children, do they speak Cebuano?

They speak Tagalog, all of them. In fact, they don't speak Chinese. The only one who speaks Chinese, I think, is Robina. You know where she learned it? In New York University, not here. She took two years of Mandarin in New York University as an extra subject and because she had some Thai friends.

But weren't they schooled in Chinese schools here in Manila?

Lance went to Xavier, the girls to ICA. But, you know, *wala*. Anybody who studied in ICA and Xavier, they don't speak Chinese. (Laughter) You have to go to Chiang Kai Shek or St. Jude's. But my grandchildren, we have a tutor now for them. My granddaughter, three years old, she can speak Mandarin *na*.

How are you as a grandfather?

I love being a grandfather. Every morning I play with my grandchildren.

How many do you have?

Nine, but only six are with me because Lance is staying in Makati. The girls are with me. They always bring the kids to me at 8 every morning. One is four months, another is six months, another is one year... They're mostly infants.

Do you know how to change nappies?

No. (Laughter) But I find it more enjoyable to play with the grandchildren. Because with your own children, you're still busy, you're in your 40s...

Were you very involved as a father?

Well, I knew what was going on but I didn't really bother about it. But we had a rule. They could not go out after 11 p.m. and they had to come home before 11 p.m.

Did you spank your children?

I think the only one I spanked was Robina because she was very stubborn, very stubborn. (Laughter)

Maybe she took after you?

I don't know. But she was stubborn. She was only 3 or 4 years old. She wanted to bring a duck into the house. I said no.

Where did you get your children's names?

You notice all my children have either my wife's name or my name. Robina was from my name, John Robinson. Then you have John Lance. Lance is really John. Then you have Lisa, from Elisabeth. Faith and Hope [were so named] because there were a lot of trouble in the country, so, I said, I better name them Faith and Hope. And Marcia was born on martial-law day.

You once said the happiest day of your life was when your son was born. Was that ever a problem with your daughters?

I don't see it. They're very close. Even when I said Lance would head the business, they liked it. Lance has the leadership qualities and he's very, very good-natured. His sisters like him. I don't see any problem with the sisters.

Would you have given the leadership of the business to a daughter if Lance were not up to it?

Yeah, I would have. If Lance were not up to the task, I would pick one of the girls.

Who among the girls, after Lance?

Now that's difficult to answer. If I answer that, I'll have five people after me. (Laughter) I'll have five ladies running after me, "Daddy, what are you doing to us?"

Who among your kids is most like you?

Lisa, I think.

Why?

She's decisive. But, you know, I don't really know. Lance is a very, very good leader.

Who's the sweetest to you among the daughters? Most caring?

I don't know. All the same.

Who's the funniest?

Robina, I think.

The most serious.

I don't know. I think Lisa.

What else do you want to do?

I want to pay a lot of attention to the foundation, to see what can be done to really help education, the things that matter to the country. I think, the quality is not as good as before, especially in the public schools... We have quite a big budget for that every year. It can make a difference somewhere.

Do you think you've achieved your vision for JG Summit?

Well, so far, we have achieved more than I dreamed of when I was a kid. The thing now is to be sure that the next generation will carry on and make the company better than what we have now because the second generation is more equipped, more educated, more exposed to travel and all that. They should be doing a better job.

Do you collect art?

My wife does. She has a lot of paintings. Amorsolo, Ang Kiukok. There's some here also. This is where we stayed before. I stayed here for a few years but I didn't like it because it's huge. This is 2,000 sq m. When my children started getting married, we moved to this new place, only 450 sq m. It has a garden. This one has no garden.

Are you religious?

No. I believe in one God, but I'm not religious. I don't believe in hell. I don't believe in purgatory. I don't believe in many things but I believe in one god. I'm a Catholic but I don't go to church. I go Christmas only. (Laughter)

You mentioned in one of your speeches that one of the secrets of your success is the concept of delayed gratification.

No, that is part of humility, filial piety, austerity, these are basic things that you learn when you're young. Hard work, education—these are basic. And delayed gratification, that's a good word for it. Sometimes I look back and say, I should have done it before. (Laughter) But it's better to do it now because you appreciate it more. (Laughter)

Is that something you would recommend to entrepreneurs nowadays?

I would recommend it to the people who started with nothing, or started with very little... because a lot of my friends earn money but spend their money so they have no capital. *Ako naman*, I only spend 10 percent of what I earn. I have to keep capital. Well, as you said, delayed gratification. I could afford to buy Mercedes but I only bought Chevrolet 40 years ago.

What is your car now?

Now it's a Lexus. It's a very good car.

And now do you fly business class?

Ah, yeah. First class and business class. I cannot fly economy because I'm too big. I don't fit. (Laughter)

You should make the seats bigger in the economy section of your planes.

In Cebu Pacific, we have only one class, monoclass.

Do you have plans to expand the routes of Cebu Pacific?

We're now flying to Hong Kong and Korea. We'll be flying to Singapore at the end of the month... There are a lot of Koreans now coming to Manila and Cebu, especially Cebu. They enjoy it here. They like the diving, the beaches. They have money to spend.

Weren't you flying to Singapore already?

We stopped because of the SARS. For Singapore we're charging, you know, P1,499. That's only $30! ... We have very good planes, these 319s and 320s, very efficient. We're going to fly to Bangkok, Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur, also September. Beijing and Shanghai in October.

How soon will you fly to America?

That is difficult. That would take another year and a half to two years unless we lease planes.

But do you have plans?

Yes.

Do you use a helicopter to travel?

We have two helicopters but I'm afraid to take the helicopter. My brother James is the one taking it. We have a very beautiful one. It's a French two-engine [chopper]. I took it only once and it's been with us six years. I'm allergic to... I've known a lot of people who've died [in a helicopter] because when a helicopter drops, it drops this way (gestures the motion of a falling chopper), not like a plane that can glide.

There was a rumor for some time that you were going to move all your businesses to Singapore.

How can you move this? I'll never sell these assets. I might do more business outside but I would never get rid of these assets.

How about China, are you doing business there?

China, yes. We make products in Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong, China. You can eat our candy, our snacks, chocolates. We're the only company in the Philippines that is in all these countries with the full complement of manufacturing. There's nobody else, not even San Miguel. We're the only one. Remember we're a Philippine brand that's made in the Philippines, developed by Filipinos and being sold all over Asia. That's something very unusual. We've always imported from other people.

What is the biggest legacy of John Gokongwei?

I don't really know. I think I've done my best for my family, for my country, for myself and for the whole community. And I would say we have given jobs to more than 30,000 families and we have shown the young that you can achieve without shortcuts. That's about it.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 2660 Series of 2006

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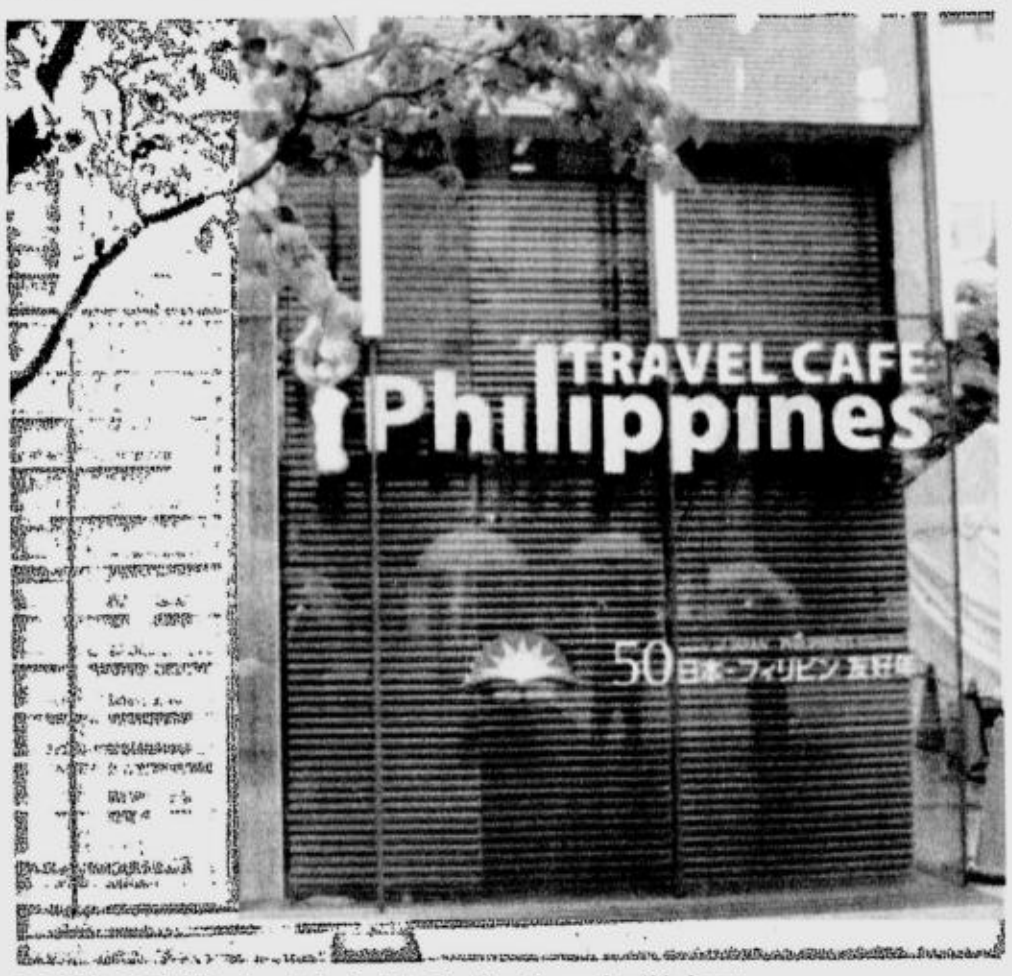

TRAVEL Café Philippines is the first destination-themed café in Japan.

A Travel Café, a 'hilot' center, a new office and a beautiful goodwill ambassador—these are just some of the aces up DOT Team Japan's sleeve

Are you ready for the Japanese invasion?

IT'S A WRAP. The cafe's Lumpiang Binondo DOT

EAST meets Southeast. Travel Café Philippines' Mango Sushi DOT

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

TOKYO, JAPAN—Hilton Tokyo's Kiku Ballroom was transformed into a sea of brightly colored ternos and beautiful barongs peppered with festive kimonos and sleek suits at the gala dinner hosted by Philippine Ambassador to Japan Domingo L. Siazon Jr. Guests were ushered in from the cocktails area to await the arrival of the Imperial Family's Prince Hitachi, brother of the Emperor, and his wife.

Soon, everyone—members of the media, Japanese dignitaries, officials and members of the diplomatic corps in Japan—sat down to enjoy a very Filipino dinner: *kinilaw na* tuna *at sariwang lumpia, tinolang manok, bistek* Cebuano, *leche flan na may mangga at bayabas* with *ube* ice cream.

A cultural presentation followed, with Philippine Cultural Dances performed by the Philippine Cultural Dance Troupe of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, a group consisting of students

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1104. Series of 2006.

Are you ready for the Japanese invasion?

JAPANESE press members enjoy the *halo-halo* at the café's launch.

From page D1

and graduates of the university's Philippine Studies Program. They danced the Pastores de Talisay, Polkabal, Singkil and Tinikling, their vibrant costumes bringing life to the stage.

But the night's scene stealers were Filipino Broadway actor and singer Jon Joven and classical singer Rachelle Gerodias who masterfully sang pieces like "Sa Kabukiran," "The Prayer," "Karata Chino Hana Gasa I Ta Yo" and the goosebump-inducing "Bayan Ko."

It was a beautiful way to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Japan and the Philippines-Japan Friendship Year.

But the gala dinner was only one part of the festivities. The Philippine Food Festival is ongoing at the Hilton Hotels in Tokyo, Nagoya and Osaka. The food festival, which aims to showcase the best of Philippine cuisine, highlights Pinoy favorites like pork *embutido*, *lechon kawali*, *kare-kare*, chicken and pork *adobo*, *lapu-lapu escabeche*, beef *caldereta*, chicken *afritada*, *lechon manok*, *humba na may pugo at itlog*, *pastillas de mani*, *leche flan*, *biko* and more, prepared by Russel Abarquez and Glenn Rivera of the Hilton Cebu Resort and Spa.

SECRETARY Ace Durano poses with the Philippine Cultural Dance Troupe of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies at the Hilton Tokyo.

Eventful month

There's no doubt about it—July was an eventful month for the Philippines and Japan. And no one knows this more than Tourism Secretary Joseph "Ace" H. Durano, who, with his team, has been making tremendous efforts in promoting Philippine tourism in Japan.

Last year's efforts have been well-rewarded. At the gala dinner, he said, "For the first time in history, Japanese arrivals to the Philippines reached the 400,000 mark in 2005 with the launch of the "*koko doko?* Premium Resort Islands Philippines campaign."

In an interview with Philippine media, he added, "I just got the report that we've grown for 24 months consecutively. That's never happened in the history of our promotions here in Japan. It has been a steady market with between 6- to 8-percent growth per month. And for a mature market like Japan, where the outbound market is no longer growing, that's a remarkable achievement."

When asked about the money DOT has been spending on promoting tourism, Durano said, "We spend about $8-$12 per tourist that we get from this market. The Japanese tourist spends $110 a day. So, just on their first day in our country, we already get back the $8-$12 we've spent on promotions. It's really a worthwhile investment for us. We are now in a virtuous cycle. We've achieved a volume of tourist arrivals now, that's attracting investment. And these investments in turn expand our capacity, which in turn allows us to bring in more tourists. I called this a virtuous cycle because, ultimately, the benefits of these are more employment, business opportunities for the entrepreneurs in the country."

And because 2006 has been declared Philippines-Japan Friendship Year by Proclamation No. 905, DOT is embarking on an even more aggressive marketing campaign this year.

'Hilot' in Japan

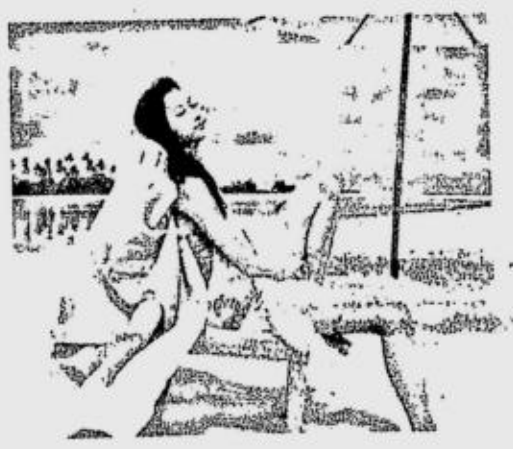
"We're going to the grassroots by putting up *hilot* centers," said Durano.

Yes, *hilot* centers. In a theme park called Namja Town.

Operated by the Bandai Namco group of Japan, Namja Town, located in Sunshine City, Ikebukuro, Tokyo, draws 2.5 million visitors a year. One of Namja Town's attractions is Riraku no Mori, the first healing theme park in Japan, which now includes the *hilot* salon.

The salon, which offers the services of well-trained Filipino masseuses, is about 50 sq m big and has four beds. Opened July 13, the DOT believes that the Philippine-Style Coconut Oil Treatment Hilot Facility will help promote Philippine tourism in a country where massage and health care is a ¥900-billion industry. Philippine-style *hilot* was first introduced in Japan at the award-winning Philippine Pavilion during the World Expo 2005 in Aichi.

Wellness and cuisine are two important components in the DOT's efforts in Japan, according to Secretary Durano.



"The market we are targeting is the Japanese ladies. Although our beaches continue to be the draw to the country, they have other interests that they want to experience when they're in our country. They want wellness and cuisine and so we're letting the Japanese market experience just a taste of it before getting the full experience when they go to the Philippines."

But how do you promote your cuisine in a country also known for its good food? You put up a restaurant, of course.

Philippine Travel Café

Jointly opened by the DOT and Travel Café Co. Ltd., the Philippine Travel Café located in the business district of Iidabashi, Tokyo, aims to raise awareness of the Philippines with its friendly and comfortable atmosphere.

The café will be serving dishes created by Via Mare owner-chef Glenda Barretto in close collaboration with Travel Café chef Ryo Hayasaka. The menu includes *lechon*, *adobo*, *lumpia*, *sinigang*, *pancit* and other Filipino favorites—even Pinoy beer.

The café (which transforms into a bar at night) offers so much more than just food and drinks. It can also provide information about travels to the Philippines with its travel concierge service. There are also plans to hold events there, to showcase live music and to allow visitors to speak to travel and diving experts.

The café, which can seat 70, has beautiful and modern Filipino interiors, based on traditional concepts and inspired by multi-awarded Philippine architect Bobby Mañosa. Interior designers and developers of the café include Movement 8 designers Budji Layug and Al Caronan, Impy Pilapil and Locsin International.

The Japanese press were given the chance to sample *halo-halo*, *lumpiang* Binondo and other goodies from the café's menu. Well-made videos promoting the Philippines played in the background, featuring Regine Velasquez and catchy taglines like, "It's more than the usual" and "If you don't like this (island), we have 7,106 more to choose from."

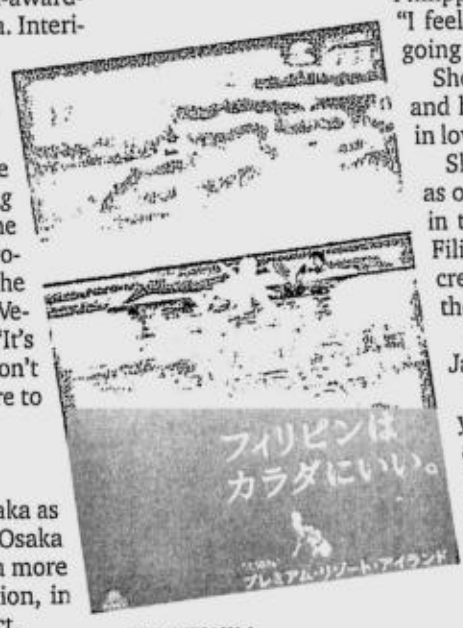
GOTO Kazuyuki, Anne Watanabe, Ambassador Siazon and Undersecretary Eduardo Jarque Jr. at the Philippine Travel Café launch

New tourism office

Things are exciting for DOT in Osaka as well. It opened the new DOT Osaka Tourism office in the same week at a more strategic and more accessible location, in the bustling Chuo-ku business district.

As if the café, the new office and the *hilot* center aren't enough, DOT has one more secret weapon in letting Japanese women know about their campaign: Japanese model Anne Watanabe, the goodwill ambassador to Japan for the Philippines' 2006 campaign.

This tall beauty, who is the daughter of actor Ken Watanabe, has been declared Japan's Model of the Year and has graced the catwalk for designers and brands like Anna Sui, DKNY, Diane Von Furstenberg, Louis Vuitton, Marc Jacobs, Tommy Hilfiger, Nicole Miller, Derek Lam and more.



GOODWILL Ambassador Anne Watanabe is the star of DOT's tourism campaign in Japan.

CAMPAIGN PHOTOS COURTESY OF DOT

Anne was introduced to the press at the Travel Café press conference as well. When asked how she felt about being chosen as the Philippines' goodwill ambassador, she said, "I feel very honored. I was excited about going to the Philippines. It's wonderful."

She has gone to the Philippines twice and hopes to return soon. She has fallen in love with Bohol and Amanpulo.

She also counts her attempt at *tinikling* as one of her most memorable moments in the Philippines. Anne is a big fan of Filipino desserts. "Mangoes and *ube* ice cream are my favorites. I ate a lot of those."

What does Anne have to say to the Japanese about the Philippines?

"If you go to the Philippines with your friends, with your families or with anyone and you want to eat good food, you want to feel refreshed, you want to play around, you can do it. You can do everything in the Philippines—that is its major attraction. More importantly, it's very near Japan."

The Philippine Travel Café, which is located at 1/F, Tokyo Kusei Kaikan 3-5-1 Iidabashi Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo, is open 7:30 a.m.-11 p.m. on Mondays to Fridays, 8:30 a.m.-11 p.m. on Saturdays and 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m. on Sundays and holidays.

E-mail the author at ppastor@inquirer.com.ph

TRAVELBRIEFS

Two new awards for airline

Korean national carrier Asiana Airlines (OZ) received recently citations from Boeing and Global Traveler. Boeing presented Asiana another Best Schedule Reliability Award. Asiana also received the citation in 1993 and 1997. Through Global Traveler's online poll, Asiana received the Best Onboard Service award and Flight Attendants Award 2005. Incheon International Airport, the hub of Asiana's operations, won Best Airport Worldwide 2005. Call Asiana Airlines at 8925688.

Online ticketing

Domestic carrier South East Asian Airlines (Seair) has launched its integrated Airline Reservation and Ticketing System (stag+ARTS), developed in partnership with local software development house stag Philippines Inc. People with access to the Internet and a web browser can use the system to book flights from anywhere in the world. They can view flight schedules, ticket prices and seat availability as well as buy tickets online. Participating credit card companies include Mastercard, Visa and JCB. Call 8490100 or visit www.flyseair.com.

Just for kids

Emirates makes flying enjoyable for children with an extensive choice of in-flight entertainment. The selection includes several Disney films, television shows and games.

Emirates also provides special children-sized headsets and meals specially prepared for children in brightly colored, leak-proof boxes. Meals, which include a toy and a watch, can be booked 24 hours before departure.

Photo workshop

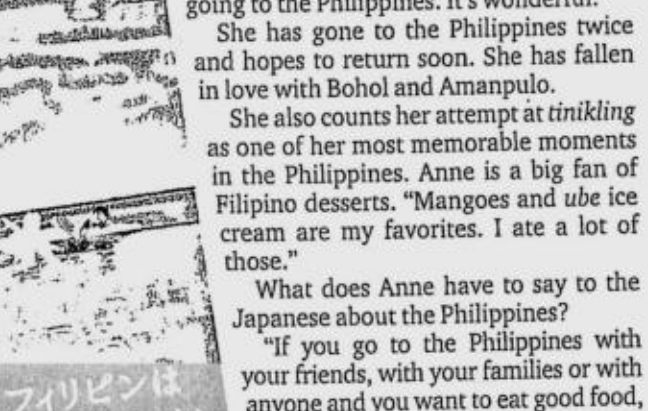
Air Miles Management is holding its first Travel Photo Workshop conducted by George Tapan.

Scheduled monthly, the workshop will bring participants to different international destinations between August and November, where they will stay for 9-12 days. Among the countries to be visited are Canada, Turkey, Cambodia and Vietnam, China, including Tibet.

Participants in the workshops would get a chance to feature their best shots in a photo exhibit and other Air Miles projects. Each workshop will be limited to 25 participants. Call 8994834 or telefax 8976556 or e-mail airmiles@surfshop.net.ph.

Triathlon in Macau

The celebration of 2006 Macau World Heritage Year continues with the holding of the 18th ITU Macau International Triathlon today and the Macau FIBV Women's Volleyball World Grand Prix Aug. 25-27. Call 8122595 and 8130947.


MEMBERSHIP MEETING. National president Angel Ramos Bognot and Baguio Chapter president Cathy de la Rosa (right) of the National Association of Independent Travel Agencies (Naitas) welcome Ilocos Sur Vice Gov. D.V. Savellano (left) and Philippine Tourism Authority general manager Dean Barbers at the 3rd Naitas general membership meeting at Club Intramuros.

Spain's Cebuano 'amigos y amigas' celebrate

SPANISH MONTH WAS CELEBRATED IN July by the Casino Español de Cebu. It was highlighted by a formal dinner at the club's Salon de España. Guest of honor was Spanish Consul Gen. Don **Javier Ignacio Martinez del Barrio** who came with Don **Cesar Lozano.**

Extending a warm welcome were casino president **José Sala** and his wife, the former **Susan Montenegro.**

Consul Gen. Martinez del Barrio sat at the presidential table with Señor Sala, Mr. and Ms **Michel Lhuillier,** Ballet Center's **Fe Sala Villarica,** and **Gema Luisa Pido** whose 1940s home in the Lahug area drew the VIPs' interest when they passed by it.

An exquisite menu was prepared for the occasion. It started with layers of thinly sliced potato and octopus "a la Gallaga" and leeks wrapped in *jamon serrano*. Everyone drooled over prawns bathed in foie gras-flavored vinaigrette.

The cream of zucchini was laced with olive oil and molten buffalo cheese for which the north of Cebu is famous. After a sherbet of mango and a dash of Cointreau, the main course—Prime Rib of Roast oozing with sherry sauce—was served. A mousse of white and dark chocolate completed the repast.

Complements to the chef

As coffee and pralines were served, chef **Ipar Miranda** was introduced, drawing a thunderous round of applause. Ipar personally prepared the menu, assisted by a throng rightly called the kitchen brigade. The team, led by club general manager **Ed Tongco** and service manager **Rudy Ruby** also made an appearance.

Ipar has been studying in Cuenca (Spain) for the past four years, learning the intricacies of Spanish, as well as international, gastronomy. He is the son of prominent sugar baron **José Maria Miranda** and his lovely wife **Happy Ouano.** The couple was there that evening with younger son **Josu** and daughter **Merche,** escorted by **Dennis Acebron.**

Of great help to the Casino Español on this occasion was the organization Amigos de España, whose president, **Amparito Llamas Lhuillier,** was very much present that evening. Also present were secretary **Myra Gonzalez** and treasurer **Julina Pando de Muertegui.**

Other prominent *amigos* and *amigas* present included **Danny** and **Zeny Deen; Choy** and **Rosebud Sala; Ernesto Aboitiz; Enrique** and **Lulu Aboitiz; Annabelle Lu Ym; Teresin Mendesona; Tessie Javier; Manuel** and **Margot Larranaga; José Mari Martinez; Choco Laplana; Pilar Cusi; Pinky Chang,** with **Jaime Chua; Fernando Delgado; Joe** and **Chinggay Utzurrum; Jun** and **Cherry Muntuerto; Kingsley Medalla;** and **Angeles Antigua,** with her mom, **Carmen Muertegui de Garcia.**

The Casino Español was well-represented by its vice presidents, Cebu City Councilor **Gabby Leyson,** who came with **Tina Jordana;** secretary **Jimmy Escano** and his wife **Ellen,** collecting kudos as the meat served came from their specialty deli Don Merto's; treasurer **Manuel Sainz;** director for cultural affairs **Tony Veloso Jr.;** and **Nonoy Alba,** director for sports events.

With them were Dr. **Nestor Alonzo,** who writes a popular gourmet column in one of the Cebu dailies; and **Joey Villareal,** who manages ML Trading and collected due praise for the excellent red wine served that evening. Friends at their table included Bunny Pages, Dr. **Ishmael Limkakeng Jr.,** former casino president **Luis Moro Jr.,** and **Clifford Crowe.**

Casino Español's first lady, **Susan Sala,** occupied a table with son **Javier** and daughter **Carina,** as well as dear friends **Shije** and **Kumiko Onda, Paul** and **Puchi Yen.** At the table of **Tony** and **Grace Lozada** were **Mariano** and **Maricar Perdices, Miguel Diaz, Ed** and **Therese Gonzalez, Joel** and **Carla del Prado.**

Completing the guest list were **Conchista Taylor,** who sat with **Julina Pando; Josele Madrazo** and his lovely wife, the former **Maricar Montilla,** and their cousins, the Mirandas.

All we can hope at the end of this enumeration is that no one was left out.

Food festival

The following evening, there was a large turn-out once more at the Casino Español for the opening of a three-day food festival featuring typical Spanish dishes prepared by chef Ipar.

Amparito Lhuillier cut the ribbon, assisted by president José Sala, and husband Michel Lhuillier, whose trading firm set up a booth at the casino's foyer.

In the ensuing days, the booth registered record sales of Spanish specialty products supplied by Manila's Tierra de España much to the delight of **Martin Gonzalez,** who came to supervise the display. The first to be sold out was the thin sausage *chistorra*. Martin had more flown to Cebu in no time.

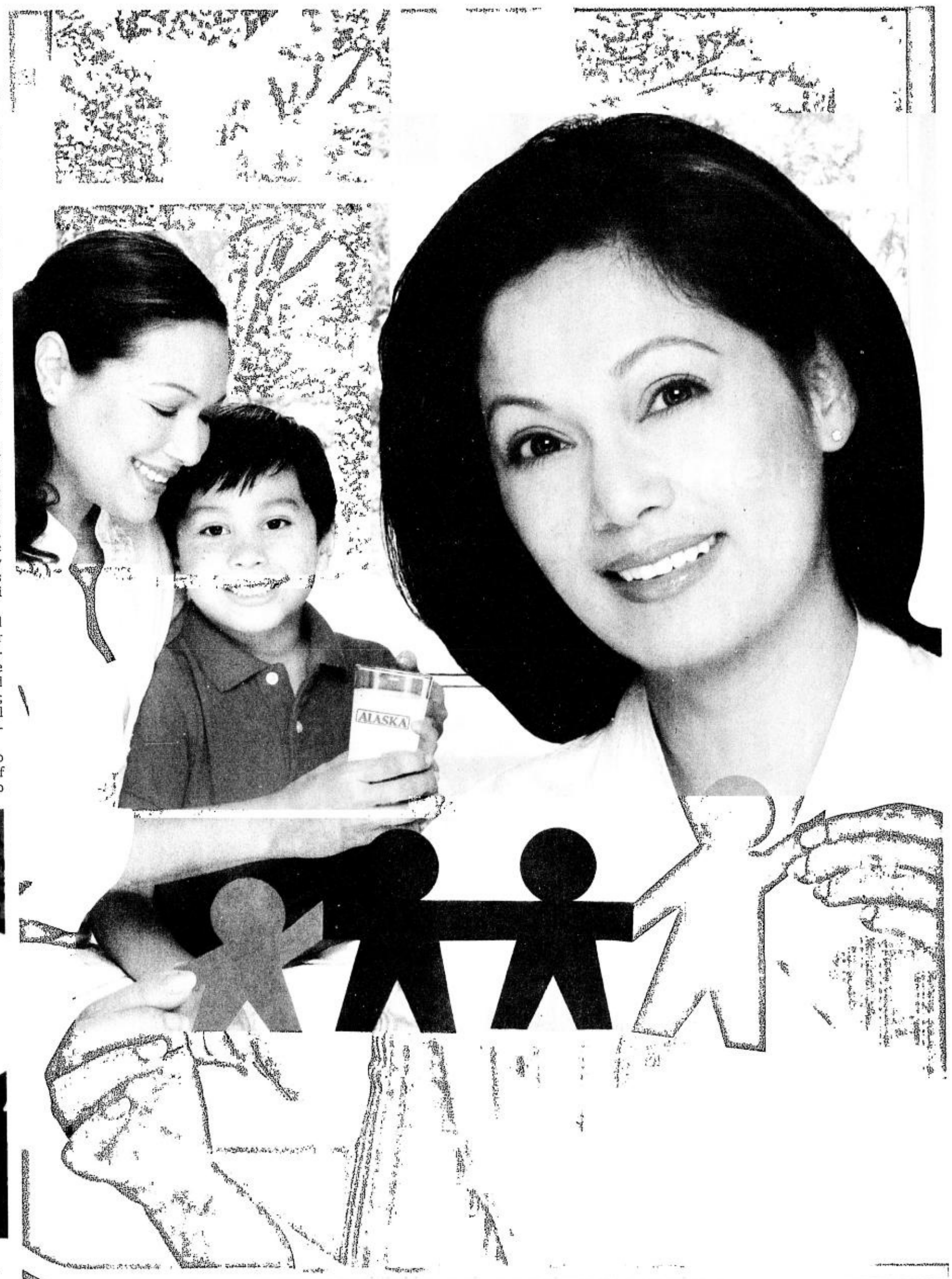
About 200 people came every night for the buffet. The casino kitchen had to churn out more *paellas, tortillas de patata, pollos estofados, pescados a la vasca,* as well as cauldrons of piping hot *sopa de ajo*.

Many of the *tapas* and dishes taught by Ipar have been incorporated into the regular club menu, and they are attracting hordes of gourmands to the regular weekend buffet dinners. Olé!

CEBU CEBU

Jaime Picornell

AMPARITO Llamas Lhuillier, president of Amigos de España (center), flanked by Zeny Deen and Annabelle Lu Ym



SPANISH Consul Gen. Javier Ignacio Martinez del Barrio congratulates chef Ipar Miranda.

ANSWER TO SUNDAY CROSSWORD

St. Padre Pio helps Lucy Torres-Gomez's mother

JULIE M. TORRES, MOTHER OF Lucy Torres-Gomez, said she was healed of cancer through the intercession of St. Padre Pio.

In thanksgiving, Julie, her husband and a group organized by Chito Bertol, who runs the Manila Seedling Bank in Quezon City, went to San Giovanni Rolando, Italy, last year to say "thank you" to the saint.

Here's Julie's testimony:

"In 1997, I started invoking Padre Pio in my daily prayers after I read an inspiring book on him. Of all the saints whose intercession I asked for, Padre Pio was the one who consistently manifested his intercession, next to Mama Mary, my greatest intercessor.

"My husband and I are both cancer survivors. It was my husband who first received a small relic of Padre Pio a few days after undergoing surgery for a malignant growth in his right kidney. This was in 2000. In January the following year, I held on to that relic as I underwent a battery of tests for a suspicious growth in my breast.

"I was told that the growth in my right breast was malignant, but fortunately it was at its earliest stage... While recuperating, a friend of mine who did not know I was a Padre Pio devotee, gave me a medal and Rosary she got during his beatification in Rome.

"I credit Padre Pio for leading us to competent surgeons, and for making it possible for our illness to be discovered at a very early, highly treatable stage so that neither chemotherapy nor radiation was needed.

"To this day, I call on him for help. I have several relics of Padre Pio. Putting them over aching parts of my body, I always find relief and comfort. Though I lose some, I am happy to say each one I lose is replaced. [There is always] someone who gives me a Padre Pio relic.

"What I find amazing is that most of them come from people who do not know I am a devotee. My husband and I have gotten used to occasional scents of roses and violets even without the flowers, signs associated with Padre Pio.

"During my birthday last year, I received a big statue of Padre Pio. I took that as an indication that I should be more active in sharing with others the life and work of this holy priest. It would be selfish to keep his mediation all to myself.

"We are propagating the devotion to Padre Pio by sharing with others what he has done for us and by donating his images to parishes that will welcome him. We hope more lives will be touched by his intercession. Sept. 23 is the feast day of St. Padre Pio."

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

Fiesta

The San Fernando de Dilao Parish in Paco starts the nine-day novena of Masses to mark the Santo Sepulcro fiesta at 6:30 p.m., Aug. 11. The fiesta falls on the 20th, third Sunday of August. Members of the Apostleship of Prayer comprise the committee in charge of the fiesta.

TV show on Mary

Commemorating the Feast of the Assumption of Mary, ABC Promotions Inc. presents the television special "MOM 3" (Miracles of Mary, Series 3), at 11 a.m., Aug. 14, on Channel 9.

The show features testimonials from people who gained special favors through the intercession of the Blessed Mother, specifically devotions to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Nuestra Señora de Guia in Ermita and Our Lady of the Miraculous Medal.

Hosted by Mat Ranillo, special guests include Nikki Valdez; Rica Peralejo; Jun Banaag, aka Dr. Love; and Imee Luzuriaga. A production of ABC Promotions Inc., "MOM 3" is produced for television by Ben P. Canlas with Meng R. Canlas as executive producer; Felino Tañada, director; and Catherine Mijares-Chua, writer.

Feast day

Other churches with images of St. Philomena are Ermita Church, the Basilica de San Lorenzo Ruiz in Binondo and St. William Cathedral in Laoag. These churches will mark the feast day of St. Philomena on Aug. 11. A Triduum of Masses will be held at 5 p.m., Aug. 8-10, at the Laoag Cathedral. Fr. Rock Bonoan is the new parish priest.

Anniversary

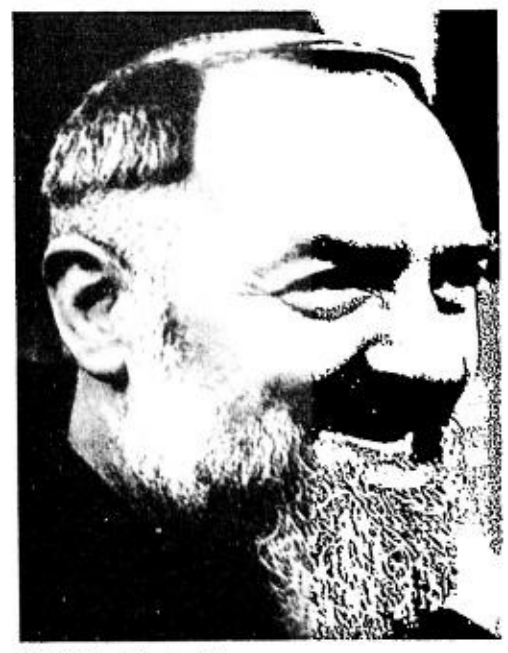
The Shrine of Our Virgin of the Poor in Banneaux, Belgium, will open Aug. 13, the 600-day celebration of the 75th anniversary of the apparitions to Mariette Beco. The Virgin appeared to the poor girl on Jan. 15, 1933, so the 75th year falls in 2008.

Mila Dolores, author of the book on the Virgin of the Poor, will go to Banneaux as a volunteer. She speaks fluent French.

Center of hope

Ra Kendra means "center of light" and it tries to bring hope to the seriously ill. I learned from Eloisa, the nurse who attends to me, that Dr. Ravi Singh, a doctor of naturopathy, was able to help a man suffering from kidney failure through diet and alternative treatments so he would not have to undergo dialysis anymore. The man is still alive and well.

While taking my maintenance medicine, I also submitted myself to alternative treatment to lower high blood sugar and cholesterol. I can walk faster now than before. Call 8436142.



ST. PIO of Pietrelcina

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Sunday LIFESTYLE

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Text us your feedback:
inquirer life name/age/city/message to
2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Fab supermodels on the comeback

By Anton San Diego
Contributor

THE RETURN OF THE SUpermodel. They're back! The one-name wonders of the '80s who lorded it over the runway and major magazines are once again in the limelight.

A pregnant Linda Evangelista, 41, is on the recent US Vogue (August issue) cover. She is the first model, and not a Hollywood actress, to come out in the revered fashion magazine for over a year.

The article, "The Revenge of the Supermodels," talks about their past glories and how they are facing the future and growing old gracefully. When she and Christy Turlington were asked if they would ever have surgery, Linda said, "I'm pro-cosmetic procedure. I use Botox and I am not afraid to say it!" In contrast, Turlington said, "I would absolutely not do Botox. It's just not healthy and it's not pretty."

The supermodels' return to the limelight, if fashion insiders are to be believed, could signal the beginning of the demise of Hollywood actresses' long reign as style/fashion icons. Nicole Kidman, Renee Zellweger and Gwyneth Paltrow have taken the back seat to younger stars like Lindsay Lohan, Paris Hilton. However, there is nothing stylish about the younger breed. One gets the impression they're merely acting out a stylist's fantasy. One reason could be that movie stars charge an arm and a leg when it.comes to ad campaigns, and supermodels' fees, while substantial, don't make a dent in designer's fees.

People have also been saying it's about time there's more character and personality in fashion ads rather than just a thin, pretty lady wearing a Chanel dress. My assumption about this is, it's probably just the 35 and over crowd sour-graping. But we do miss the supermodels' fabulousness and do not relate to Lohan, Hilton et al. Whatever the case, Linda, Cindy, Christy, Kate, Naomi—Welcome back!

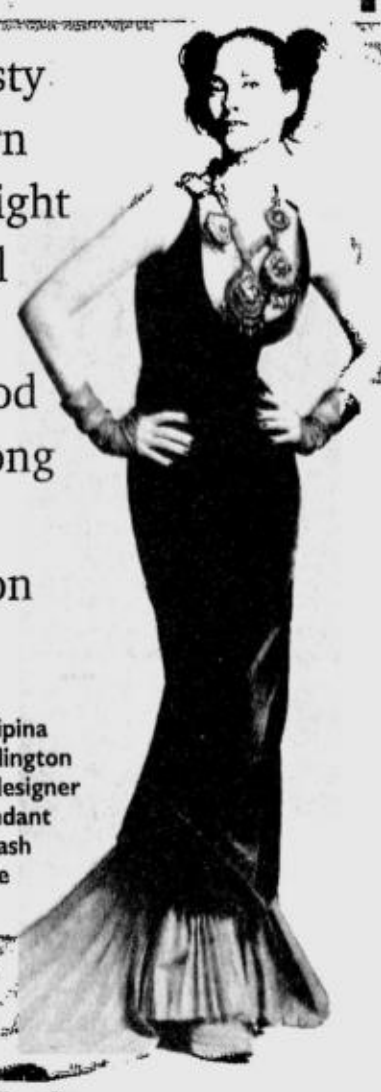
Bea Valdes in Vogue, again. International bag designer and über stylish lady Bea Valdes lands in Vogue again—this time as a newly minted jewelry designer. One of her pieces was worn by no less than Christy Turlington in a major fashion spread in the magazine. Valdes bags, which cost more than US$1,500, are so in-demand that they literally fly off the shelves as soon as they are stocked.

Another Filipina who is all set to come out in Vogue is... Okay, I promised I won't say it yet. She has just done her photo shoot and is slated to come out in the October 2006 issue. Watch out for more details in this column.

Queer Eye in Manila. By now you would have heard or read a lot about the Fab 5 coming to town, invited over by the Ayala Malls. Last year, I had the privilege of meeting the Fab 2, Thom Filicia and Kyan Douglas, along with their managers Michael Flutie and Michael Connell. When I was in New York last year I hung out with them and introduced

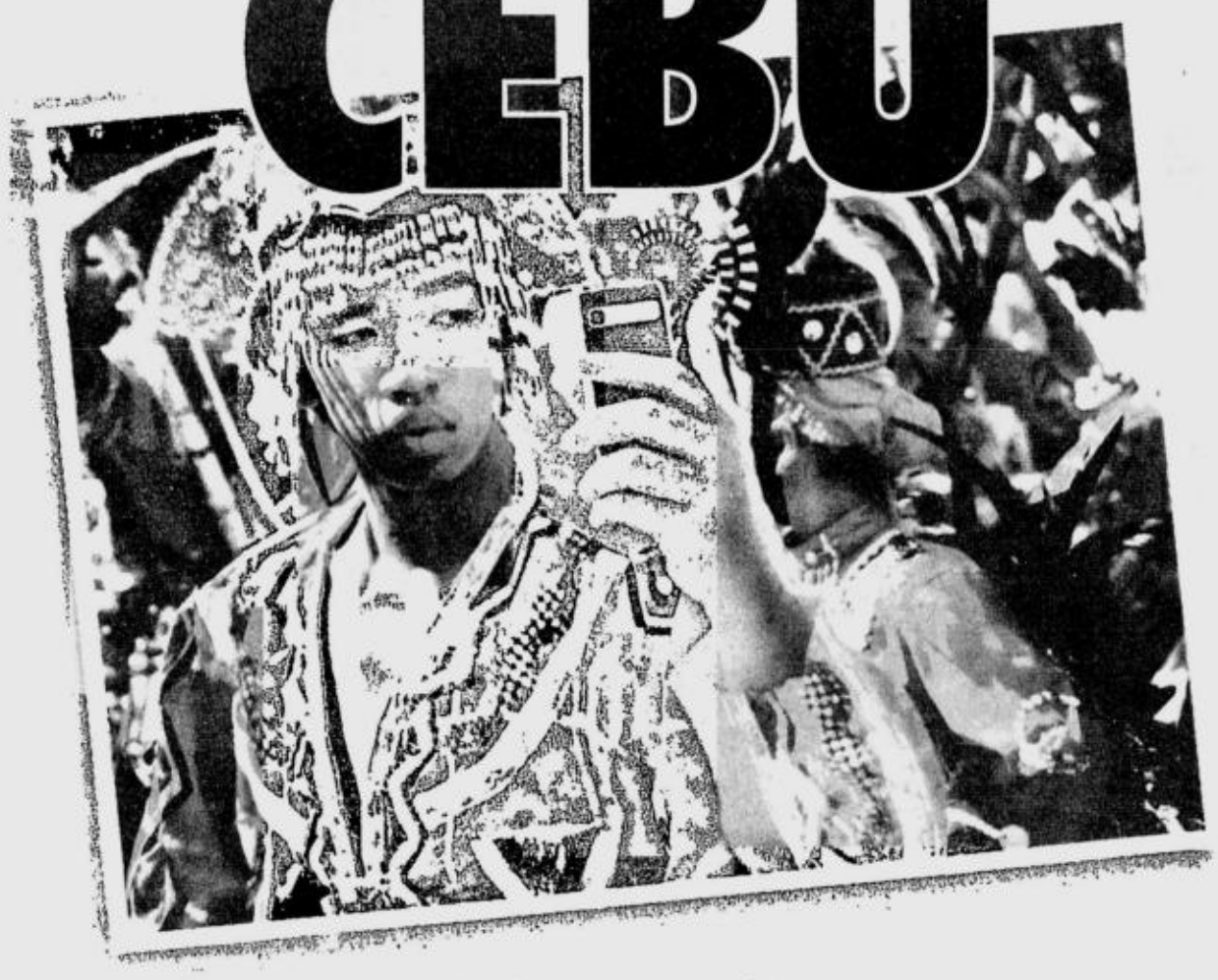
FAB/ E3

Linda, Christy et al.'s return to the limelight could signal the end of Hollywood actresses' long reign as style/fashion icons



SUPERMODEL + Filipina designer. Christy Turlington models bag/jewelry designer Bea Valdes' multipendant necklace with satin sash on the pages of Vogue (August 2006).

BIGGER IN SUN CEBU



Sun is working hard to increase network capacity and coverage by investing ₱11 billion for more cell sites with even more capacity per cell site. That means more people can make more calls and texts even when celebrating Sinulog in Cebu. Now, everyone can enjoy faster connections, best-value products and services like: 24/7 Call and Text Unlimited 24/7 Text Unlimited • Daylite Call and Text Unlimited • Sulit Calls

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After 26 years of separation, parents rekindling love

EMILY'S POST

Emily A. Marcelo

DEAR EMILY,

My parents had been separated for 26 years and have started new families. Recently, I found out they have started sending text messages to each other, saying stuff like they love each other again.

I find it all wrong! I confronted them and said things I should not have said.

Now we are all at odds. They say I am a "*lapastangang anak*" and my not accepting their "relationship" makes me a truly "*lapastangang anak*!"

CONFUSED

Your youth and inexperience are screaming all over your letter. You are being very hard on yourself and on your parents. It's about time you tried to learn something about human nature.

Not everything around us is a definite black or white. Or red or orange or blue.

Look at our surroundings and up close you will notice that colors come in varying degrees of shading—no matter if they fall under the same category.

It's the position of the sun that gives them their distinctive hues. We just accept them for what they are and call them by the names we know.

It is the same with relationships. Same with families. They belong to that category or subset, no matter if they are happy or not, communicating or not, in love or not.

People change. People evolve.

Your parents were in love once. Who knows what happened to their psyches in the 26 years they were apart. That germ of love they felt for each other in their youth probably never died.

Or now that they're older, with grown children from separate families, they might want to experience again that giddy feeling of young love. Or they might just be bored with their lives that they're trying to grasp at straws, trying to find some new excitement.

Give them time to resolve this "exploding" episode. Who knows? There may not really be anything here, except a harmless flirtation between two middle-aged people.

If there is really something brewing between your parents, let them resolve it on their own. You as their child must give them all the room to maneuver and make sense of whatever decision they'll be making.

In the meantime, don't be a pain to them. How about trying to be a friend, instead?

E-mail the author at emarcelo@inquirer.com.ph, Subject: Lifestyle, or send your letters to INQUIRER. Listen to Ms Marcelo co-host the program "Kalikasan Vigilante," 7:15-8:30 p.m., Monday-Friday, on dwBR 104.3 FM.

Mid-year garden show ongoing

PRIZED plants of collectors and growers are on display.

THE HORTICULTURE 2006 MID-YEAR EXhibit is ongoing until Aug. 7 at the Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center, Quezon Ave. corner Edsa, Quezon City.

The show features prized plants of collectors, growers and scientists. Fred Salud will give a lecture on euphorbias at 3 p.m. today.

Meanwhile, Edsa Garden House, located at Edsa cor. Quezon Avenue, Quezon City, is offering an Advanced Flower Arrangement seminar 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Aug. 12; and 2 p.m.-5 p.m., Aug. 13. Seminar fee is P3,500. Deadline for payment is Aug. 9. Call 9270510 or 9293189.

SUNDAY CROSSWORD

PREMIER CROSSWORD/ By Frank A. Longo — CHORUS

ACROSS
1 Put a different label on
6 Verdi works
12 Unlawful immigrants
20 Suffix with motor or hippo
21 Gas station name
22 Concerning infants
23 .875, as a fraction [HORSE]
25 Plant with drooping tubular flowers
26 Guns, as an engine
27 Had dinner
28 Rabid rooter
29 Flanders on "The Simpsons"
30 Look up to
33 — generis (unique)
34 People with mortgages, often [CAT]
38 Yeasts, e.g.
39 Crooner Clooney
41 OK grade
42 Locomotive, to a toddler [OWL]
44 CNN's home
48 Ottawa loc.
49 Miracle- — (name in garden care)
50 Bank employees
51 Stephen Foster title girl
56 Shar- —
58 Plate scrap
59 Space
60 Filling dish
61 "Look here later" [SNAKE]
66 "Let's Make —"
67 Quiz
68 Simon & Garfunkel's "— Rock"
69 Provide food for
70 Ineffective tries [SHEEP]
73 Pack rats, e.g.
74 NHL great Bobby
75 Wife's title
76 Free — bird
77 Tact
78 Lymphoid mass in the throat
81 Insurance giant, for short
83 Zig's counterpart
84 In an ethical way
85 Be totally clueless [PIG]
93 Mai — (cocktail)
94 Anticlimactic occasion
95 Big name in life insurance
96 Poker pair [DOG]
100 Fear and wonder
101 Jots down
102 "I get it!"
103 Whiz-bang
104 Mule's father
105 Slithery fish
106 Is a couch potato
110 They're hidden in this puzzle's seven longest answers
115 System for connecting computers
116 Disclose
117 Not stale
118 Feel relief
119 In an acute way
120 Touchy- —

DOWN
1 Ave. intersectors
2 Before, in sonnets
3 "Mazel —!"
4 New World Explorer Vespucci
5 Not brand-name
6 Elevator pioneer
7 Cribbage marker
8 Use up
9 More run-down
10 Long (for)
11 Mariner's "Mayday!"
12 Disrepute
13 Western director Sergio
14 Bagel fish
15 Chang's twin
16 Damsel
17 Make amends
18 Tennis legend Rod
19 Gliders over snow
24 She raised Cain
28 — good reason
30 Oilers' and Steelers' gp.
31 "Well, obviously!"
32 Letters after L
33 Chimney dirt
34 Eyelash, e.g.
35 Largish jazz combos
36 Not ill
37 1963 Best Actress Patricia
39 Barrett of gossip
40 See 97-Down
43 Sharpen, as skills
44 Heart parts
45 Cancels out
46 People who outline
47 Bad-mouth
51 Ocean froth
52 Not cook enough
53 Helmsman
54 Kuwaiti, e.g.
55 Actress Carter
56 Gone by
57 Suffix with sermon
58 Electrical resistance units
61 Dampens
62 Elvis swiveled his
63 "Toodle-oo!"
64 Look over
65 Put tar over
67 Late
71 "Othello" servant
72 Purple shade
73 Symptom
77 — accompli
79 Defense gp.
80 Kingly Norse name
81 Give a ring
82 McNally's mapmaking partner
83 District
86 Intended to avoid
87 Guys that cover stories
88 Boris of old horror films
89 Free time
90 Morticia's hairy cousin
91 Paris-to-Amsterdam dir.
92 Petrol
94 Elegant feature
96 Stunning gun
97 With 40-Down, good witch's conjuring
98 Pledges
99 Frilly green veggies
101 Director Craven
104 Vampire creator Rice
105 — May Clampett
107 Tennis unit
108 Wrath
109 Forensic ID
110 Arctic bird
111 Feel poorly
112 Born as
113 Broadband connection: Abbr.
114 Demure

answer on page D3

Milestones

We welcome announcements of weddings and engagements. Submit names of engaged couple, names of parents, date and place of wedding, and gown designer along with a photo of the couple and a sketch of the bridal gown, if any, to the INQUIRER, P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City. E-mail to lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph. A photo of the bride and groom is required if the wedding has already taken place. Announcements will be printed depending on space availability and at no cost to the senders.

NODA DEBUT

Maika Sabate Noda, daughter of **Masatoshi** and **Sofia Noda**, celebrated her 18th birthday recently at the Manila Hotel. She is a second year pre-med student at the University of the Philippines Los Baños.

SALIENTES-QUIANZON

Manuel Gonzalo "Mato" Salientes III, son of **Manuel Jr.** and **Marita Austria-Salientes**, married **Betty Li Anne M. Quianzon**, daughter of engineer **Florello** and **Betty Martinez-Quianzon**, in elaborate ceremonies at the Nuestra Señora de Gracia Church in Guadalupe. Reception followed at the Garden Ballroom of Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

QUIMCO-ARROGANTE

Marlon Rey Quimco, son of **Rolando** and **Ruth Quimco**, wed recently **Daisy Ann Arrogante**, daughter of doctors **Robert** (†) and **Anita Arrogante**, at the Royal Garden, Ozamis City. The bride's gown was filled with fine handmade beads on white duchess satin and the groom's tuxedo was designed by **RL Canada**.

CHAN-SERRANO

Benson O. Chan and **Djhoanna T. Serrano** were married in civil rites recently at the Manila City Hall. Reception followed at China Place Pan Pacific Manila.

SALARDA 50TH ANNIVERSARY

Ireneo and **Honorata Salarda** celebrated recently their 50th wedding anniversary at the St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish Church in Nabunturan, Comval Province.

Fab supermodels on the comeback

From page E1

them to Filipino international bag designer Rafe Totengco whose bags they have used in their TV show. Kyan told me, "That's my favorite bag!"

I again had the privilege of emceeing their show at the Greenbelt 3 and hanging out with them. After the show and after-party, a companion and I met up with them at the Makati Shangri-La Horizon floor. Carson was chatting up with an Arab man who kept telling him, "I am straight!" Carson replied, "Prove it," so the guy called his wife in Saudi Arabia. Carson had to tell the surprised wife, "Your husband told me you can buy all the Louis Vuitton you want!"

The next night I was invited to a private dinner for the Fab 5 hosted by one of my closest friends (and oldest—we were classmates in I.S. from Grade 1 onward), Kit Zobel, at the new Serendra, which looks like *the* next big thing. We ate at Nelia Silverio-Dee's Guava, where the food was fantastic. It was so good that I had to ask Kyan, who ate about six pieces of *pritchon* (Peking duck-style *lechon*), "I thought you were a vegetarian?" And he answered, "I thought so, too!"

After dinner, we headed back to the hotel where we just stayed by the pool. There, the Fab 5 were in a relaxed mood as we spoke about everything, from celebrities they've met to their work and love life. As I was writing this, I read on the Internet that the executives of TV network Bravo were still debating whether to renew "Queer Eye" in the US after its 100th episode. Well, like you, I'm hoping it will be renewed.

Most of the guys left Saturday evening, along with their managers Michael Flutie, Michael Connel and Amit Zev (this handsome and straight 24-year-old, who works for Flutie Agency, should be an actor himself). While saying goodbye at the Horizon Floor, Thom and Ted tried to play a practical joke on Kyan. In one of the books they had to sign, they posted a note for Kyan, stating "You are ugly. You are dumb." Everyone naturally had a good laugh.

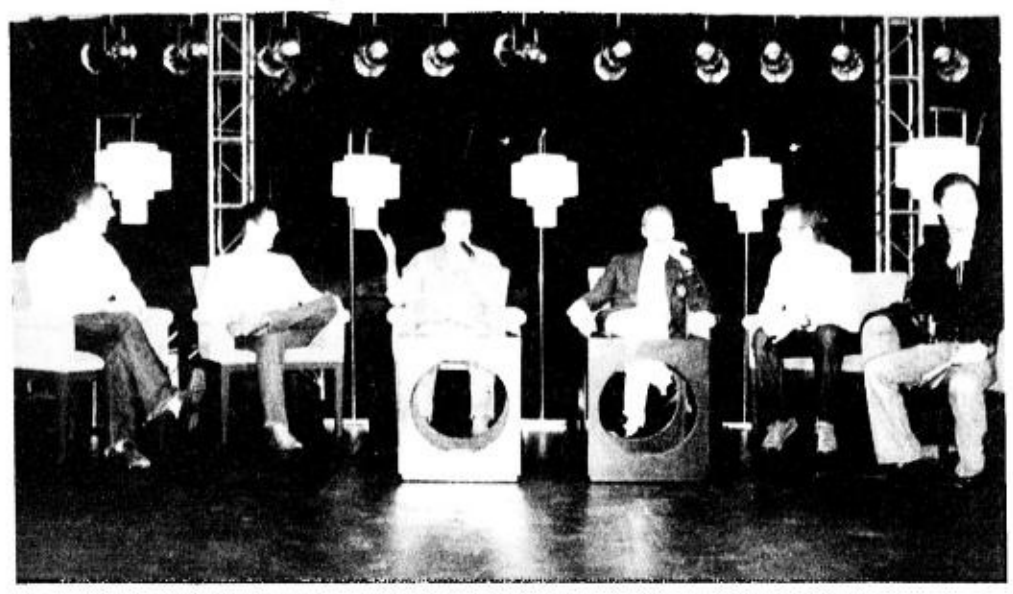
Ted Allen and his partner Barry Rice stayed on to travel to Vietnam and Thailand. They have plans to come back in March next year, this time to experience other places like Cebu and Boracay.

My time with them was really refreshing, since they are all down-to-earth, funny and great individuals. Surely, they enjoyed the food and the shopping part of their sojourn, but most importantly, they expressed their good feelings that the Filipinos are "simply the best."

E-mail antonsd@philtatler.com

FAB PEOPLE. Michael Flutie, Kyan Douglas, Thom Filicia, Kit Zobel, Carson Kressley and Jai Rodriguez

AT THE GREENBELT 3. The Fab 5 with the author



Eco-trade fair Aug. 8-12

MIRIAM COLLEGE IS HOLDING an eco-trade fair 7 a.m.-5:30 p.m., Aug. 8-12, at its campus on Katipunan Ave., Quezon City.

The fair showcases unique eco-friendly products, organic produce, indigenous arts and crafts, and a number of eco-friendly technologies and Pinoy inventions.

Taste organic and vegetarian meals and healthy food or bring home some organic produce you want. Find out the latest indigenous arts and crafts creations of grassroots women's groups. Learn how you can help save the environment at the Learning Tents.

Open to the public, the eco-trade fair is sponsored by the Environmental Studies Institute (ESI), Miriam College, in coordination with Alternative LyfStyle Marketing & Consultancy (AlterMktg). It is one of the highlights of the school's annual Environment Week celebration. Call 4364736 or 5805400 loc. 3560.

Home and techno fair

SEE THE LATEST GADGETS AND hi-tech accessories from different electronics and computer shops during the Home and Techno Fair 2006 on Aug. 8-22 at the Festival Supermall in Filinvest, Alabang.

Among those participating in the fair are City Telecom, Avid Sony, Lazer Musical, Odyssey, Automatic Center, Electronic Boutique, Abenson, Asianic, Games.Com, The Computer Authority, Octagon, CD-Green and Sun Shop.

Home display setups of various furniture stores will be showcased at the second level main entrance and third level Chef's Avenue. Gaming competitions courtesy of Kidz Station will be held at the Carousel Court on selected weekends.

A discount of up to 50 percent will be given on selected items by establishments throughout the mall.

Call 8503514. Festival Supermall is at the Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

BMW I Series cars all lined up just before the start

MARC Nelson and his Club I speedster

CLUB I The Hunt—Media Edition participants in a race sponsored by Petron, Addict Mobile and Samsung

BMW marketing mavens Michelle Tuason and Leana Farrales

Losing a camera, but not my composure

TESSA!

Tessa Prieto-Valdes

It's of the same frustration level as losing a phone. But, as I always say, everything happens for a reason!

IF THERE IS ONE cliché that I truly believe, it's the line "Everything happens for a reason." Time and again, so many fortunate and unfortunate incidents occur in our lives that are baffling and unexpected, but that we just need to accept.

When awful things happen, we grow more worthy and righteous, and when good comes, we need to stay humble. Even if we question why things happen, we can only learn from life's challenges and try to become a better person without losing focus on what really matters.

My luck with digital cameras has been terrible. Last week, my latest camera was stolen. That's my third stolen camera, believe it or not! Since I take my own pictures for this column, I carry my camera everywhere, right next to my cell phone. My evening bags need to be big enough to carry both gadgets, plus the rest of my paraphernalia—lipstick, hand gel, perfume, mirror and of course, my HSBC Red Card.

Losing a camera is of the same frustration level as losing a phone. Unfortunately, I had not yet downloaded the photos from the farewell party of **Tom Zita**, the country head of the Kuok Group of Companies. The Shangri-La Ballroom was packed with well-wishers bidding him bon voyage on his retirement, as Tom now focuses on being a more active grandfather. Truly, family is his top priority and it's always admirable to see someone bow out at the top of his game.

BORGY Manotoc at 103.5 radio station with Ernie and Jeena Lopez

ANC'S Angel Rivero and C! Magazine's Angelo Puyat wearing their Tee Box shirts

INQUIRER'S Bryan Prieto and the Sea Princess

"SPORTS Unlimited's" girls, Priscilla Meirelles and Jackie Castillejo

TOP GEAR'S Vernon Sarne and Aris Ilagan of Manila Bulletin

THIRD placers Dong Magsajo and Jeff Reyes of Philippine Star

The day my camera was stolen, my adrenalin was pumping from very early that morning. My 20-year-old son, **Bryan**, and I were invited to the BMW Club 1 The Hunt—Media Edition by BMW marketing wiz **Leana Farrales**. We would be racing around in a BMW 1 Series, completing tasks for points. As a member of Club 1 (www.club1-bmw.com.ph), I was already familiar with the car and figured we had an advantage against the other five teams.

I figured we just needed to beat two other teams and we'd make third place already. My driving skills are not the best, but I'm a great "back seat" navigator. Bryan and I knew it was a fun competition but thought we might be the weakest team, so we were the most challenged and determined to succeed.

From the beginning, we were truly at a disadvantage as points were deducted for tardiness. Obviously, I woke up late for the 9 a.m. start. I told the organizers that they should at least credit my efforts for getting up that early! In my rush to get ready, I changed in the restroom and accidentally left my camera inside. When I realized my stupidity, I rushed back in but, of course, it was too late. My Canon Digital Ixus was gone!

It is hard to be positive about believing in the goodness of Pinoys but, like I say, everything happens for a reason. Maybe something terrible was going to happen, but by my losing the camera, that took the bad karma already. I should have taken the advice of World of Feng Shui Philippines owner **Maritess Allen** and protected myself from the burglary star with a blue rhino. I shall have to visit her new shop at the Mall of Asia soon. I also need to thank **Toni Castro**, who lent me his photos for this article.

After a moment of depression, I was race-ready thanks to the potent caffeine of UCC coffee. Our team color was green, my favorable color, as it is the color for those born in the Year of the Rabbit. So I was feeling lucky again until Bryan told me the car has manual, not automatic, transmission. Although he knows howto drive both, my son is not that competent with a stick shift. At the start of the race, we almost stalled.

As I focused on our race plan to chart the order by which we would accomplish our tasks, Bryan was still not getting the hang of driving and we actually stalled on a bridge on the way to one of the dealers of BMW. It was totally hilarious, but we were panicking while apologizing to the other motorists around us. We switched places and I drove the rest of the race.

We also "improved" our street knowledge by getting our family driver to lead the way in another car. Thus, we found Autohaus BMW right away and proceeded to Klassik BMW thereafter. We even got all the way to Pampanga to accomplish the task with the most points.

Dream driving

Driving the 1 Series at top speed on the NLEX was a dream. To any law enforcement people reading this, let me just note that this top speed is an exhilarating 80 kph, well within the limit. I could feel my adrenalin pumping again. It also helped that the car is iPod-ready and Bryan put on his rave sounds (or whatever they call their music today) and I felt like a teenager again.

After having toured most of BMW's six dealers, we headed to Mall of Asia to collect more points and a free pair of Nike shades at Nike Vision. Mall manager Steven Tan quickly arranged for a car valet and an escort to the store. On the way, I spotted a World of Feng Shui Shop and quickly detoured to shop.

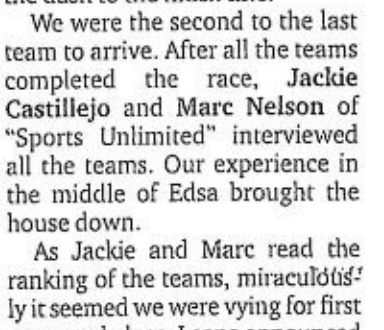
After garnering over 5,000 points, we were already late for the finish but Bryan calculated that if we completed two more tasks, we would still be up. So we rushed to CPK and Gold's Gym, where he had to complete a circuit of exercises, and finally made the dash to the finish line.

We were the second to the last team to arrive. After all the teams completed the race, **Jackie Castillejo** and **Marc Nelson** of "Sports Unlimited" interviewed all the teams. Our experience in the middle of Edsa brought the house down.

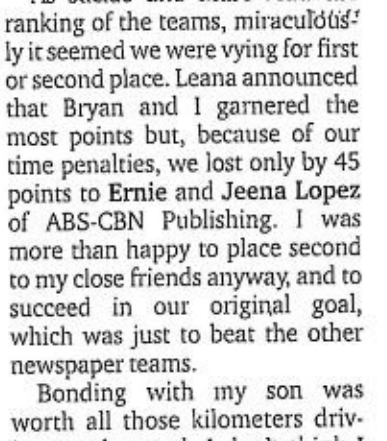
As Jackie and Marc read the ranking of the teams, miraculously it seemed we were vying for first or second place. Leana announced that Bryan and I garnered the most points but, because of our time penalties, we lost only by 45 points to **Ernie** and **Jeena Lopez** of ABS-CBN Publishing. I was more than happy to place second to my close friends anyway, and to succeed in our original goal, which was just to beat the other newspaper teams.

Bonding with my son was worth all those kilometers driving on the road. I don't think I have ever spent a whole day on the road with him. So maybe that's the silver lining behind the cloud of my lost camera—the good reason we ended up in this race. As I always say, everything happens for a reason!

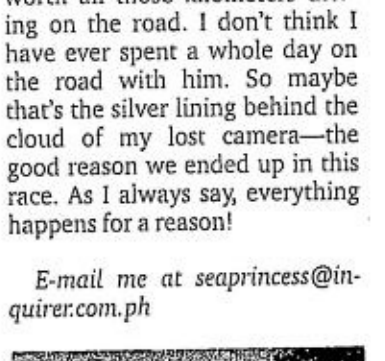
E-mail me at seaprincess@inquirer.com.ph



ANTON Huang and Nedy Tantoco



TERTIUS Vermeulen and Donnie Tantoco



GIGI and Jolly Mabanta

TOM and Kathy Zita with Symon Bridle

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**

sms feedback: Inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) **or email us at** pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

HAPPY FACES AT URIAN AWARDS

BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS. Hilda Koronel receives her first Urian Award on Thursday night.

PHOTOS BY JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

BEST ACTRESS. Jaclyn Jose commends the Manunuri for helping promote young film artists.

"MAXIMO OLIVEROS". Nathan Lopez starrer takes four trophies, including Best Picture.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD for Eddie Garcia. A man of few words, he simply said, "Thank you."

"YOU'RE SO BEAUTIFUL." Best Actor Robin Padilla continues the courtship of Regine Velasquez.

SHARON CUNETA serenades Eddie Garcia with a medley of her hit songs during the awards show at the Ateneo de Manila University in Quezon City on Thursday. Best Director Mes de Guzman thanks Kankana-ey children Rhenuel Ordono and Analyn Bangsi-il, his "Kalimugtong" inspirations, right.

COMIC BANTER. Awards show hosts, Pia Guanio, Janno Gibbs and Ogie Alcasid make light of long lulls.

Rome picks up RP 'renaissance'

Festival exec eyes Filipino films with 'great interest'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ITALO SPINELLI IS making the most of his week-long first visit to the Philippines by watching a wide variety of local films, glossy mainstream productions as well as low-budget indie movies from the Cinemalaya and Cinemanila film festivals.

The Italian cineaste explains that his job is to select movies for two festivals—the Asiaticafilmmediale, now on its seventh year, as artistic director; and the Rome International Film Festival, which debuts in October this year, as consultant.

Spinelli reveals that different Filipino films have been featured in the Asiaticafilmmediale, which focuses on Asian cinema. "For example, 'Markova: Comfort Gay,' 'Batang Trapo,' 'Bridal Shower,' 'Duda' and 'Santa Santita.' These films were received warmly by audiences. We had double and late-night screenings," he recounts.

This year's Asiaticafilmmediale is set Nov. 18 to 26; the Rome event, Oct. 13 to 21.

Now that he's also helping put together the Rome film event, Spinelli is training his sights on Filipino movies once again. He says Rome Mayor Walter Veltroni and Goffredo Bettini, president of the Musica per Roma Foundation, are spearheading the RIFF, envisioning Rome as a venue for a major film event, rivaling Cannes and Berlin.

He reports that selections will wrap up by the middle of the month. The hectic process has required a lot of globe-trotting on his part. "I served as a juror at the Osian Cinefan Festival in New Delhi, India, where Jeffrey Jeturian's 'Kubrador' swept the awards," he notes.

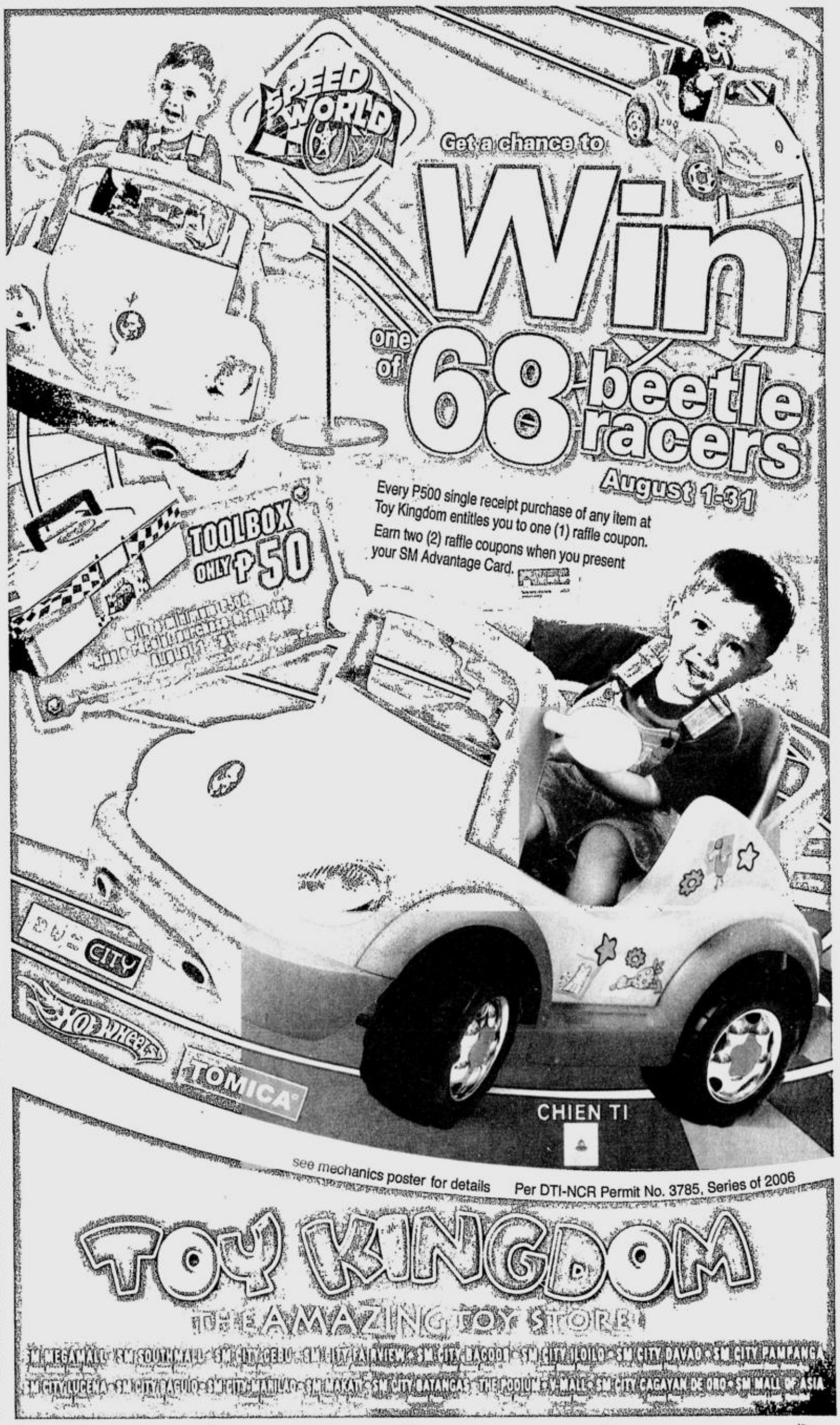
From India, he proceeded to Hong Kong, then Manila. Next week, he will be in Brisbane, Australia.

Considering the world-famous works of Federico Fellini and Roberto Rosellini, an international film festival set in Rome seems long overdue.

Mr. Veltroni has been thinking about it for the past 10 years and we've been working on the pro-

RP/ F2

ITALO Spinelli: Movies should first make sense to the local audience. RODEL ROTONI



Images on my TV screen

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

RECENT TELEVISION SHOWS HAVE come up with unusual or instructive features that need to be underscored, one way or another:

On last Sunday's "Shall We Dance?" telecast, **Carmi Martin** and **Roderick Paulate** emerged as the two survivors who will square off with each other and their respective partners in the celebrity dance tilt's monthly finals.

Despite the lackluster quality of their performances, they defeated **Jao Mapa** and his lovely partner **Rada** through sheer dint of their nostalgia value.

Perhaps fans can't be blamed for wanting to see the stars compete against each other in the monthly finals. But some of the jurors *can* be faulted for giving their so-so performances last Sunday a high score of nine. Well, at least they didn't give them a perfect score of 10, as some judges did the previous week.

What's up for next Sunday? Going by nostalgia factor and last week's scores, Carmi should come out on top. With more realistic scores, hopefully.

Another issue related to dance tilts is the obvious gayness of some of the female celebrity dancers' "male" partners. In fact, some of them behave like they think they're prettier or sexi than the female sta they're partnering.

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So, when the judges say they want to s "more romance and sexiness" in the dan numbers they're evaluating, the fem celebrities may be thinking, "How is that p sible, when my partner thinks he's more beautiful than I am?!" How indeed?

The problem can be solved only with better casting. There are macho DIs out there, and even the gay ones can be encouraged not to swish and pout and wiggle their fannies, and to act like the dashing male dance partners they're supposed to be.

Embarrassing act

Elsewhere on the TV screen, we chanced upon a news report on men urinating in public, and were astounded to see the field reporter accosting a man while he was relieving himself, and capturing the act on-cam. The poor fellow was so embarrassed that he ran away —after completing the act of nature, we hope.

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Incompetent hosts

Finally, some viewers are up in arms over the presence of so many unqualified hosts on television. They usually host small shows that cater or pander to niche audiences. How, viewers wonder, did they ever get shows of their own?

Well, some of them have the right connections, others pay for the airtime that gives them the privilege of appearing on TV regularly, while still others are relatives of producers, religious leaders, entrepreneurs with products or services to promote in the guise of TV programming, etc.

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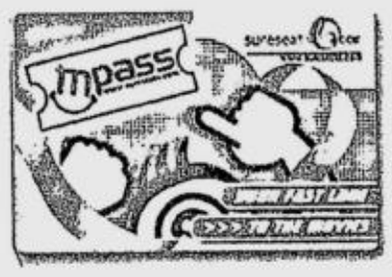

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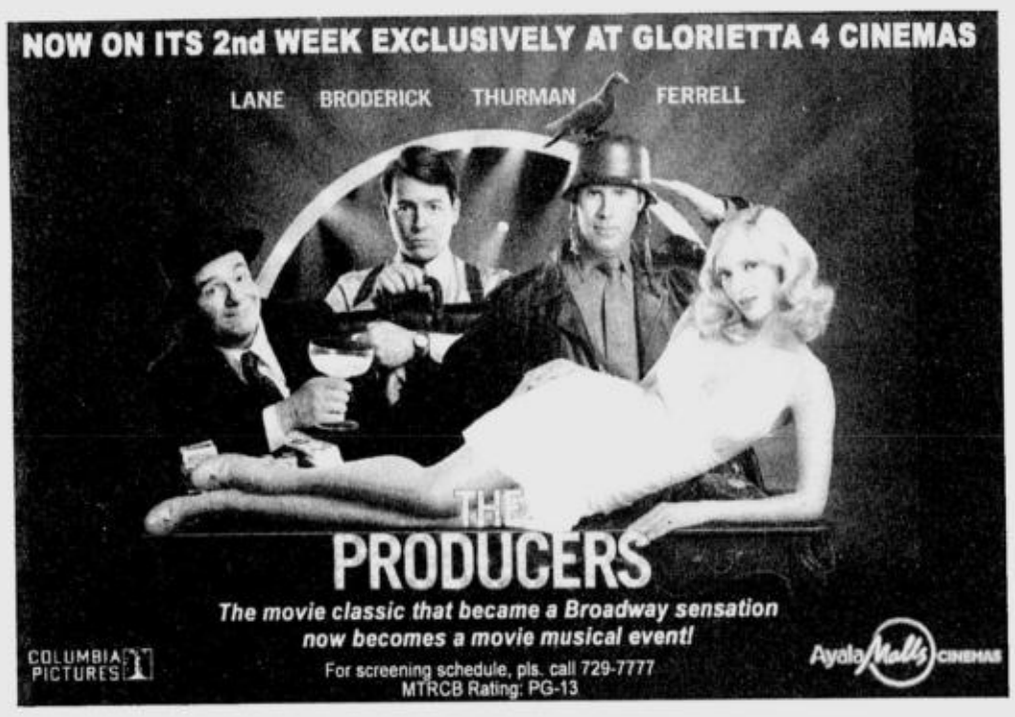

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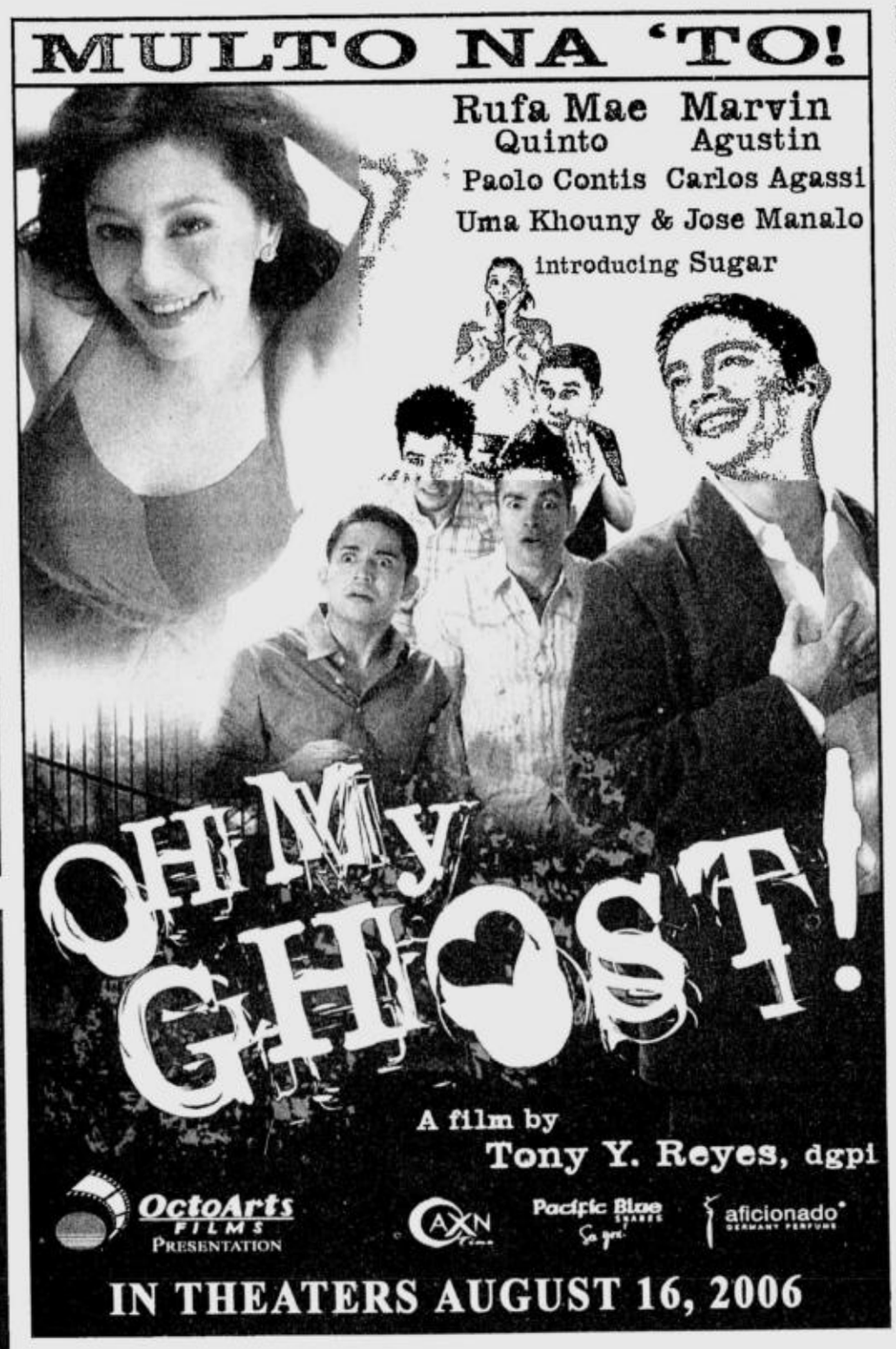

Adam Sandler-Kate Beckinsale romatic comedy
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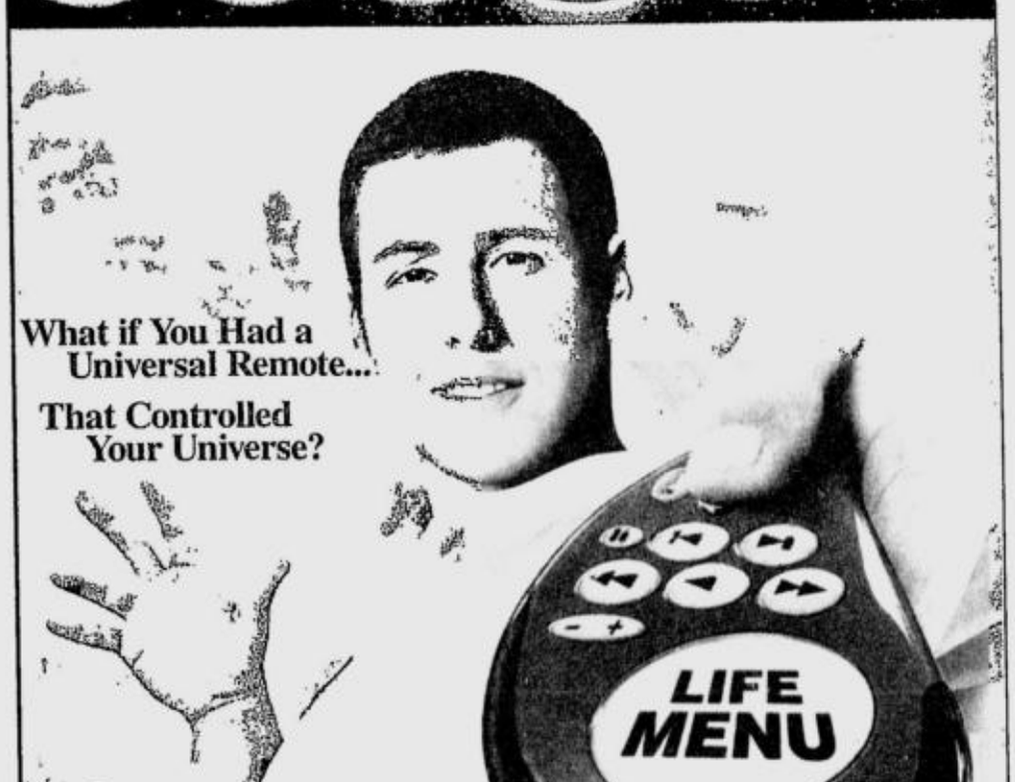

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Rome...

From page F1

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Will there be Filipino movies?

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What do you make of the renewed interest in Filipino films in the festival circuit?

There is a new energy among young digital movie-makers. I think there is going to be a rich variety to choose from. There's some kind of renaissance.

What led you to Filipino movies?

Lino Brocka. I've seen "Biktima," "Bona" and other titles. A month ago, there was a retrospective on Filipino movies on [the Italian TV channel] RAI 3. It showed movies from the Golden Age of Philippine Cinema, classics by Gerry de Leon, as well as newer works by Brocka, Ishmael Bernal, Mike de Leon and Mario O'Hara. It was a big success. There is great interest in Filipino movies in Europe.

What can help Filipino movies cross over abroad?

No one can predict what will work at the box office. But I think it's important for filmmakers to be honest in their work. Before aiming for festivals abroad, movies should first make sense to the local audience.

Gay dancers can be encouraged not to swish and pout and wiggle their fannies, and to act like dashing male dance partners

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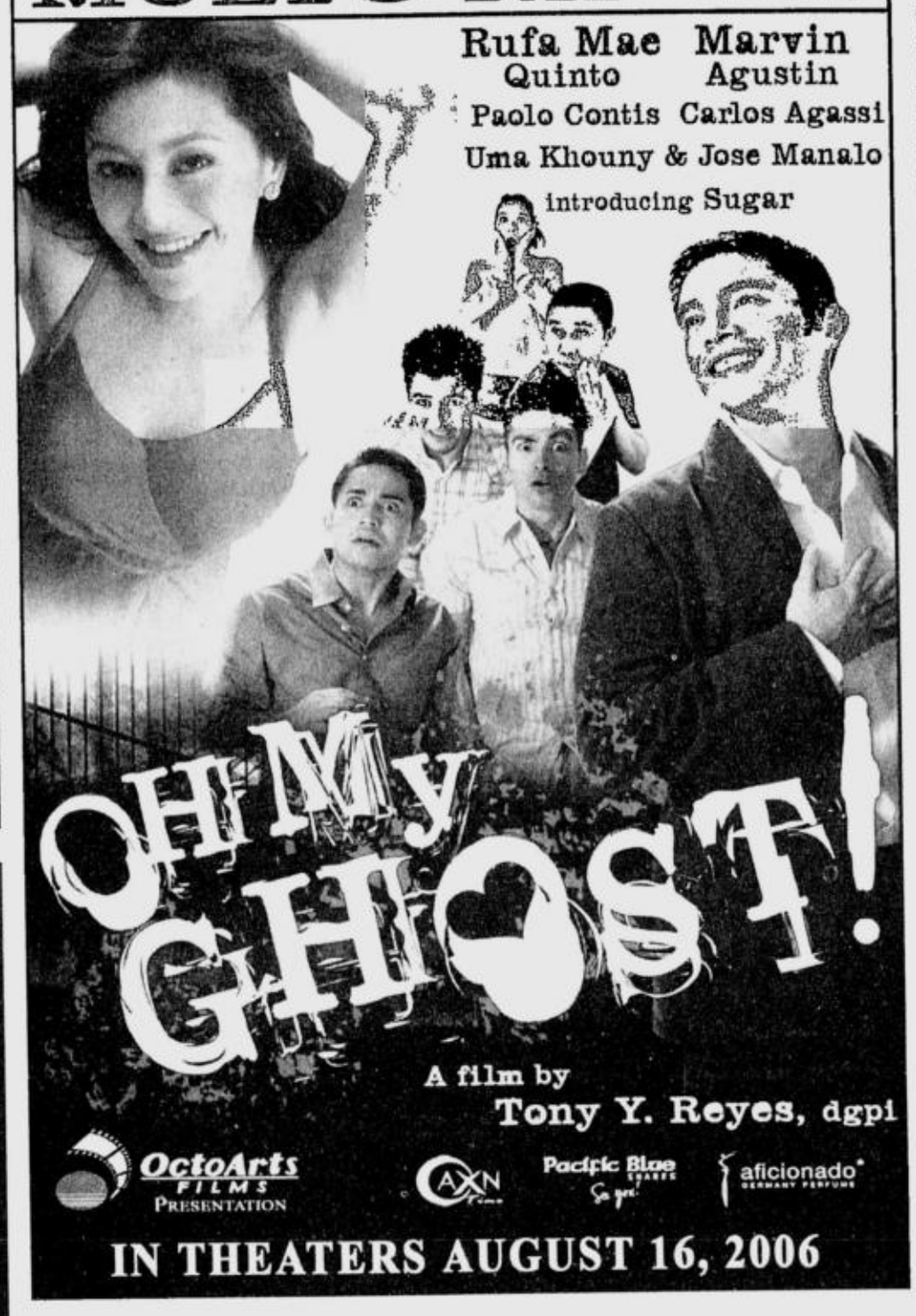

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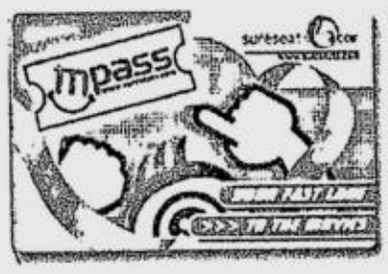

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It's a free country, so viewers aren't against the presence of these people on TV *per se*, it's their incompetence they're miffed at. If you can't speak correctly, mispronounce words, behave nervously, can't ask the right questions and appear to be terrified of the TV cameras, you shouldn't appear on television, right?

The onus is also on the TV executives who agree to put incompetent hosts on the air. They should be reminded that their essential duty is to be of service to viewers, not to their friends, relatives, business contacts, etc.

It's their obligation to open their channels only to competent hosts and well-produced programs. If they do less than that, that makes them incompetent as well.

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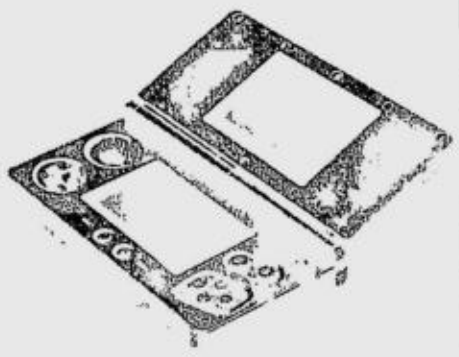

THE YO-YO
Irises open electronically to reveal a miniaturized engine with traction power up to 90 pounds. The main body is magnetic and the chord is a specially developed form of super-nylon.

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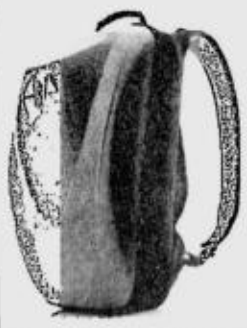

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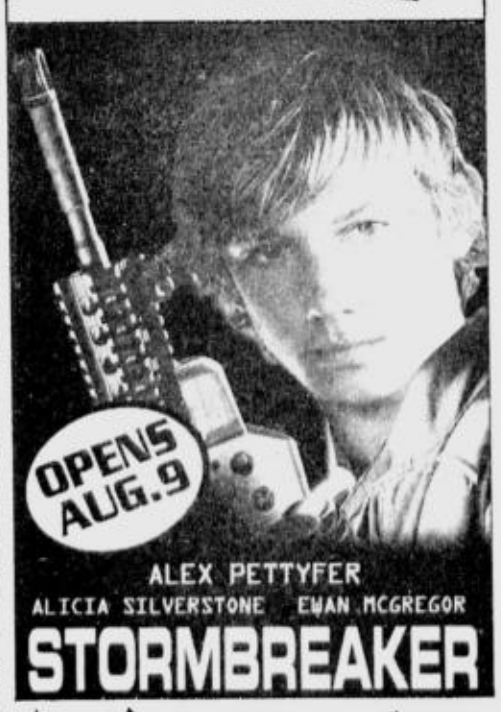

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1 MIAMI VICE
MTRCB. R-13
1:00, 4:00, 7:00, 10:00

2 ANT BULLY
MTRCB. GP
1 00, 3 15, 5 30, 7 45, 10 00

3 SUKOB
MTRCB PG-13
12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40

4 WOLF CREEK
MTRCB R-18 1 20, 3:30
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 MTRCB: GP
6 00, 9 10

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE BREAK-UP
MTRCB R-13
12.00, 2 30, 5 00, 7.30, 10.00

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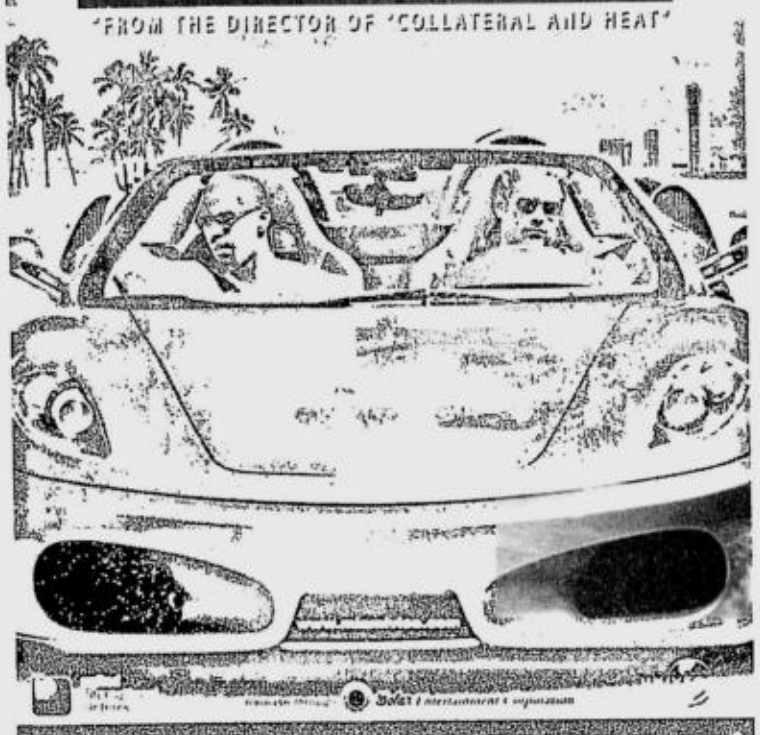

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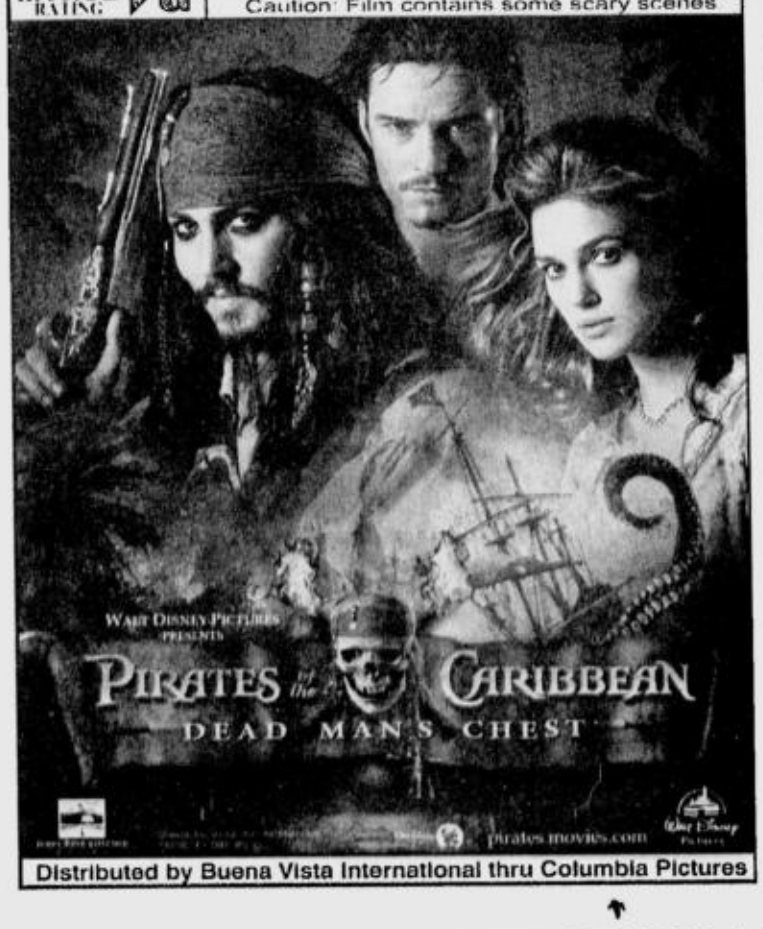

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12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

2 MIAMI VICE
10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50

3 JUST MY LUCK
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 THE ANT BULLY
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

5 SUKOB
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

6 VICTORY

7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:30 3:40 6.50 10:00

8 THE BREAK-UP
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

9 WOLF CREEK
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

10 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

ERMITA

1 SUKOB
10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 WOLF CREEK
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

3 THE ANT BULLY
10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

4 TAMARA
12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:05

5 MIAMI VICE
10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50

6 JUST MY LUCK 12:30 2:50
THE BREAK-UP 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:30 3:35 6:40 9:50

METRO EAST

1 LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 2:30 4:40 6:50 9:00

2 SUKOB
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00

3 THE ANT BULLY
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

4 JUST MY LUCK
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00

6 THE BREAK-UP
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

7 MIAMI VICE
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

8 WOLF CREEK
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

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Fill in the missing letters to complete the right answer

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M_C H_EL M_N N
2. Plays the role of Sonny Crockett in the Miami Vice movie
_O L _N F A _ R _ L L
3. Jamie Foxx plays this character in the movie.
R C A _ D. I .B S
4. In the TV Series, who played the part of Caitlin, the woman Sonny Crockett marries?
S H _ E N _ E _ S I O
5. Miami is in what US State?
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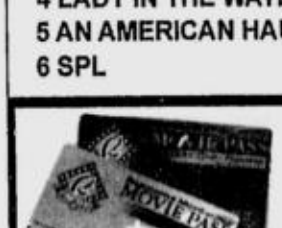
6 SPL

1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 WILD ORCHID 2
4 UNITED 93



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ENTERTAINMENT NEWS during the week of Aug. 6-12, over the years:

- 1948:Allen Funt's "Candid Camera" debuts on ABC as "Candid Microphone."
- 1963:"Beach Party," Frankie Avalon and Annette Funicello's first film together, released.
- 1969:Sharon Tate and four others found brutally murdered in Tate's Los Angeles home.
- 1972:Elvis and Priscilla Presley filed for divorce.
- 1982 Actor Henry Fonda died at age 77.

DID YOU KNOW...

- 1994:Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley made first public appearance as newlyweds in Budapest.
- 1995:Grateful Dead singer/guitarist Jerry Garcia died of a heart attack. He was 53. *AP*

Right on the money

By Gibbs Cadiz

AMNESIA, AMNESIA.

One of the 2006 Cinemalaya Film Festival's recurring ad spots showed a woman trying to wiggle out of a minor traffic violation by weaving a cinematic story of love, heartbreak and a missed date at the altar due to, well, amnesia. The apprehending cop got so taken in by the tale that he let her go. "*Nasa istorya 'yan*," said the tagline, tongue firmly in cheek.

What a rich and pleasing irony, then, that the Best Feature Film in the recently concluded festival went to Mike Sandejas' "Tulad ng Dati," a film that featured for its central effect a character suffering from amnesia. How clichéd could you get? Except that "Tulad ng Dati" is anything but.

Sandejas' sophisticated, remarkably self-assured first feature is a playful but profound riff on the life and times of the The Dawn, the band responsible for operatic rock anthems like "Enveloped Ideas" and "Iisang Bangka Tayo." The Dawn has had its moment in the fickle sun, and "Tulad ng Dati" finds it scrounging around in some third-rate dive, its pioneering act now largely forgotten.

The band's four members (who play themselves in the film, and impressively at that) have resigned themselves to this dismal state of affairs. But one night, lead singer Jett Pangan gets clobbered in the head during a botched robbery, and by the time he wakes up his memory only extends up to 1988, when the band was at its peak.

Pangan's memory loss rekindles old frictions, sows fresh insecurities, and rearranges perspectives. He is shocked, firstly, at the band's much-diminished status, and more so when he learns that band leader and close friend Teddy Diaz is dead, cut down in a violent hold-up incident. And now he has a wife and teenage daughter, both total strangers.

This may sound like a rip-off of "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" and other Michel Gondry-Charlie Kaufman mind-benders, but Sandejas shows a wry, quick-witted way with the material that allows it to wink at its influences and, at the same time, keep it from pitching into bad melodrama.

The emotional scenes, like Pangan's breakdown in front of Diaz's grave, are handled with brisk restraint, the camera cutting away at just the right beat. Sandejas' staging of the movie's musical set pieces, in particular, shows ample flair—they throb with genuine electricity and energy, aided immeasurably by the film's polished sound mix (by Ronald De Asis, who won for Best Sound).

Pangan, already an accomplished theater actor, does himself proud in his first film, as does the rest of his bandmates—JB Leonor, Francis Reyes and Buddy Zabala. Sandejas' most obvious achievement in "Tulad ng Dati" is getting these non-actors to play themselves with absolutely no distancing comment or self-consciousness. Pangan's striking lack of vanity is especially admirable. The movie is largely about his insecurities and pathologies, yet his commitment to his role is complete.

Playing the late Teddy Diaz, Ping Medina is an eerie reincarnation of the fallen musician, even if his character's philosophical soliloquies could use a bit more trimming. In the role of Pangan's first girlfriend, Mylene Dizon returns to the screen with comely grace.

With its expertly edited musical sequences (Mikael Pestano copped Best Editing for his work in the film) and its scathing, dead-on commentary on the surface idiocies of the local music scene (check out how the movie plays up the wholly fictitious band Ratbunitata), "Tulad ng Dati" echoes Rob Reiner's "This is Spinal Tap."

Its backstage story, however, mines deeper veins of melancholy and redemption, and its ultimate themes—celebrity, maturity, growing old and dying, the wages of fame, friendships that defy dimensions—make it a richly gratifying cinematic experience. That this movie restores The Dawn to its rightful place in the local music pantheon is a welcome bonus.

One may carp at a few of the Cinemalaya jury's choices (Best Cinematography to Eli Balce for "Donsol" over Jun Aves' scintillating work in Ron Bryant's "Rotonda"?), but it is right on the money in giving its highest honors to "Tulad ng Dati."

This year's Cinemalaya entries will be screened Aug. 7-10 at the Cine Adarna, UP Film Center, Diliman, Q.C. E-mail the author at gcadiz@inquirer.com.ph

Not your dad's 'Miami Vice'

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

IT'S NOT YOUR DADDY'S "MIAMI VICE."

In fact, the second you hear Linkin Park and see Colin Farrell's mustachioed mug in the trailer, you just know it. This isn't the trendsetting '80s action series of the same title, at all. The characters' names and the concept—undercover cops in complicated drug bust operations—are still the same, but the movie may as well have been slapped with a different title altogether and it would've stood on its own as something else.

This remake, directed by Michael Mann (originally the seminal show's executive producer), isn't for nostalgia-seekers. It's gritty, gloomy, contains profanity and partial nudity, and is way too serious. It is yet another example of Hollywood's love for recycling or, to be more precise—extracting of an old TV show's essence and putting a familiar label on it for newer audiences. Mercifully, it bears no resemblance, either, to recent campy, crap-tacular regurgitations of cobwebbed TV franchises.

It's a hard-hitting, humorless peek into the missions of stealthy cop partners Sonny Crockett (Farrell) and Ricardo Tubbs (Jamie Foxx) and the secret societies of sin that they must infiltrate. When several of their fellow undercover agents are compromised, the duo is tasked to find their killers and bring down powerful drug factions in the process. Once again, they rely on their wits, gift of gab, and fabricated street reps to earn some big-time traffickers' trust. Expect some requisite illustrations of bravado. Gun-pointing! Haggling! Tough talk!). Yawn.

Still, it's beautifully rendered. Though devoid of bright summer colors and those old pastel shirts, the imagery is unified and enhanced by consistently crisp earth tones and shades of blue. Wide-screen sea shots, imaginatively composed quiet scenes, and excellently lighted figures are postcard-worthy. The nightlife's constantly flipping shiny and seedy sides are expertly textured, crowded by denizens who tread them with aplomb.

REVIEW

Regrettably, the main characters are flat. Are we expected to look into several years' worth of back story to really care for them? This is where it fails as a "remake."

The audience will care more about Isabella (Gong Li, who played the evil hasbeen in "Memoirs of a Geisha"), a cartel's negotiator-spokeswoman who falls for rugged hunk Crockett. At least she gets to display more sides to her than the heroes and villains, who are equally un-charismatic and bland. The big mission aspect of the story overwhelms the characters, and the film ultimately isn't about them. And unlike a TV series, where a character's lack of personality or stimulus can be remedied along the way, the movie version left out the crucial attention to individuality.

The quick action scenes are generic face-offs, and come late into the movie. Well, at slightly over two hours, you'd wish "Miami Vice" did more, but "in the end," to quote Linkin' Park, "it doesn't even matter."

ACCLAIMED DOCUMENTARIST Ramona Diaz with LA-based cinematographer Gretchen Hildebran in Legaspi. PHOTO BY ERROL AFED

INSET, "The Learning" is shot inside a school in the outskirts of Cebu. From left: Dorotea Godinez (teacher), Hildebran, sound man Jet Amorsolo, and Diaz. PHOTO BY VERONICA VELASCO

After 'Imelda,' Ramona Diaz tackles Pinoy teachers in US

LOS ANGELES—WE GOT very curious about the subject matter of **Ramona Diaz**'s "The Learning"—how Baltimore has begun recruiting teachers from the Philippines—when we learned that the Fil-Am filmmaker has earned a grant from the Sundance Institute Documentary Fund for this work-in-progress.

Ramona, whose acclaimed documentary "Imelda" won the cinematography award in the 2004 Sundance Film Festival, shares details of her new work, especially about the aspect of teachers—mostly women—who have left the Philippines and their families to teach young American students in Baltimore, Maryland.

ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

"The Learning" is one of 14 feature-length documentary films announced by the Sundance Institute as having won the first round of prestigious grants that received a total of $605,000.

Ramona is a graduate of Emerson College (Boston) and an MA degree holder in Communications from Stanford University, whose other credits include the award-winning "Spirits Rising" (about the role of women in the 1986 People Power Revolution in the Philippines), "Exits" and "In Residence." She was born in the Philippines and moved to the US when she was 16.

Mentoring kids

We asked Ramona how the idea of recruiting teachers in the Philippines to mentor inner city kids in Baltimore came about. The filmmaker replied, via e-mail: "The hiring of foreign teachers is a national phenomenon as school districts across the US try to meet the requirement of the No Child Left Behind Act (a law that is an effort to mandate national education standards and to increase federal funding for public schools) of highly qualified teachers in every classroom. Moreover, there is also a shortage of math and science teachers. The high-tech industry offers high-paying jobs to college graduates in math and science, including women who in earlier generations pursued a teaching career.

"The Philippines has emerged as a recruitment hub because of its surplus of education majors and its English-speaking population. So last year, some officials of the Baltimore Public School System traveled to the Philippines to hire the first batch of 109 teachers and then again in February of this year when they hired another group of teachers (I believe another 80 teachers). That's not the end either. I hear they are planning to go back in September to hire more teachers for next year."

The Baltimore-based Ramona wrote a "formal" explanation about "The Learning" (she stressed that this is only a working title): "When the United States acquired the Philippines from Spain in 1898, American teachers were sent to the newly acquired territory to teach the Filipinos American values and democracy. With the arrival in August 1901 of 523 young American men and women on the US Army Transport Thomas, the US government established a public education system in the Philippines. The advent of 'the Thomasites' also signaled the beginning of the transformation of the Philippines into the third largest English-speaking nation in the world.

"A century later, the tides have turned. In Fall 2005, 109 Filipino teachers were recruited to teach in Baltimore's toughest schools, including those identified as 'persistently dangerous.' The teachers are filling openings in critical shortage areas such as math, science and special education. In a modern-day story of immigration and globalization, these young professionals are coming west in pursuit of economic advantages. Back home a public school teacher earns $3,500 a year; a private school teacher earns slightly more.

"In Baltimore, they will earn as much as $45,000 a year, most of which they will send back to the Philippines to support their families and, in some cases, entire villages. The irony is inescapable. The Filipino teachers—90 percent of them women—are leaving their own children to the care and education of others in order to take jobs teaching inner-city children in schools abandoned by many of their American-born colleagues in favor of districts with better resources in the suburbs.

Frontline

"'The Learning' will follow several Filipino teachers as they take their place on the frontline of the No Child Left Behind Act. Across the school year's changing seasons, the film chronicles the sacrifices they make as they try to maintain a long-distance relationship with their children and families, and begin a new one with the mostly African-American students whose schooling is now entrusted to them. Their story is at once intensely personal, as each woman deals with the implications of her decision to come to the US, and fundamentally public, as they become part of the machinery of American education reform policy."

Ramona also shared with us her thoughts so far about "The Learning" on a personal level: "I've been shooting since last December and in the schools in Baltimore where I've been given access to shoot. I've also made two production trips to the Philippines where we filmed four new recruits and four teachers who had already spent a year in Baltimore and were back in the Philippines trying to get visas for their families to join them in Baltimore.

Intense shoot

"As a matter of fact, I just got back from a three-week shoot in the Philippines, following the teachers to the American Embassy to get their visas (most get it, some don't), saying goodbye to loved ones, following them in the plane on their way to San Francisco, their port of entry. It was an intense shoot as we traveled the country from Cagayan De Oro, Cebu, Sorsogon to Pampanga and of course all over the Metro Manila area. The teachers come from every part of the country, extremely geographically diverse.

"The Baltimore city school officials were back in the Philippines last February to recruit more teachers for this coming school year. That was my first production trip to the

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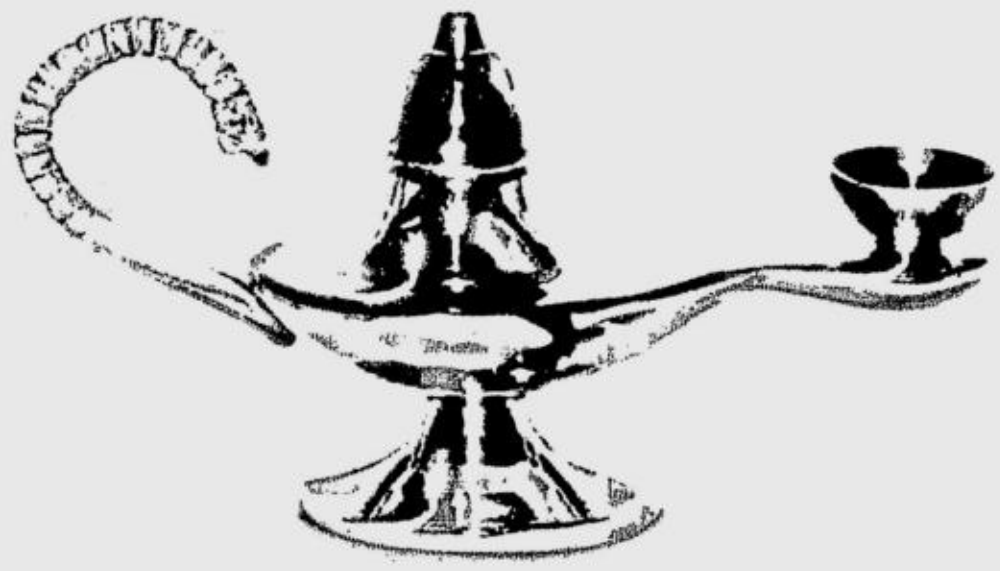

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11 LADY IN THE WATER
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9 ANT BULLY
10 THE BREAK-UP

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12 THE BREAK-UP

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2 JUST MY LUCK
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 MIAMI VICE
SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY

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Watch Ryan Agoncillo in this modern day love story proving that love indeed, truly has its mysterious ways
96.3WRocK iFM 93.9
Starring Ryan Agoncillo, Precious Lara Quigaman and Herbert Bautista
A story by Lungs Santiago and Adolf Alix Jr. Directed by Richard Arellano
Catch the RED CARPET PREMIERE on August 7 (Monday), 7:30 p.m., at SM Megamall Cinema 10
OPENS AUGUST 9 EXCLUSIVELY AT SM CINEMA
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LUZON

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CHAOS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUKOB

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 MIAMI VICE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 ANT BULLY
6 SUKOB
7 WHITE LADY
8 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 CHAOS
2 SUKOB
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 THE NUN

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUKOB
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 RV
4 LADY IN THE WATER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUKOB

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SUKOB
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUKOB
4 WHITE LADY
5 CAVITE
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 LADY IN THE WATER

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LOVEWRECKED
5 CAVITE
6 SUKOB
7 SUKOB
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 RESERVED
3 SUKOB
4 UNITED 93
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUPERMAN RETURNS
7 RESERVED
8 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CAVITE/SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 SUKOB
4 TAKE THE LEAD
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

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EVENT CALENDAR SM SHOWTIME EVENT CALENDAR
Pixel Art Media Production Company presents
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Diercted by CJ Andaluz
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SM Megamall Cinema 4
10:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m.
For ticket inquiries, please call 845 2659
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MOVIE GUIDE
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3 room SUKOB
4 room WOLF CREEK
PREMIERE
room THE BREAK- UP

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 ANT BULLY
2 THE BREAK UP
3 SUKOB
4 MIAMI VICE

stmall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7268150
3 MIAMI VICE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) SUKOB
5 WOLF CREEK

metropolis star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604285, 5433994
1 WOLF CREEK
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 ANT BULLY

THEATRES
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 SUKOB

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5211
SUKOB
LADY IN THE WATER
RESERVED
RESERVED

Filinvest
FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 SUKOB
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 ANT BULLY
5 THE BREAK UP
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 SUKOB
8 LADY IN THE WATER
9 JUST MY LUCK
10 WOLF CREEK

Blue Wave
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) SUKOB
2 (DOLBY) ANT BULLY
3 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
4 (DOLBY) RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
2 WOLF CREEK
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY
5 TAMARA

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 SPL
2 SUKOB
3 JUST MY LOCK
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 SUKOB
2 WOLF CREEK
3 WILD ORCHID-2

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 CHAOS
2 NACHO LIBRE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY) NACHO LIBRE
2 LOVEWRECK
3 (DTS DI) ANT BULLY
4 SUKOB

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6163 or 72
1 (DOLBY) SUKOB
2 (DOLBY) MIAMI VICE
3 (DOLBY) ANT BULLY
4 (DOLBY) THE BREAK UP

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 (DTS) SUKOB
3 (DOLBY) LADY IN THE WATER
4 RESERVED
Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall (Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 (DOLBY) LADY IN THE WATER
3 (DTS) SUKOB
4 WILD ORCHEDS
Cinema 2000 Cinemagix (Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 CHAOS
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 (DOLBY) SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Pandel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 (DOLBY) NACHO LIBRE
Cinema 2000 Waltermart (Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
Lianas Cinema (Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
Lianas Cinema (Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (DOLBY) THE NUN
2 HUBAD NA MULTO
3 SUKID AY BASA
4 (DTS) I WANNA BE HAPPY
Lianas MovieCity (Calamba) tel (049) 545.7292
1 (DOLBY) SUKOB
2 SAPLOT
3 (DTS) LADY IN THE WATER
4 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
5 NACHO LIBRE
Fiesta World Mall (Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 NACHO LIBRE
Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 WHITE LADY
2 BUKID AY BASA

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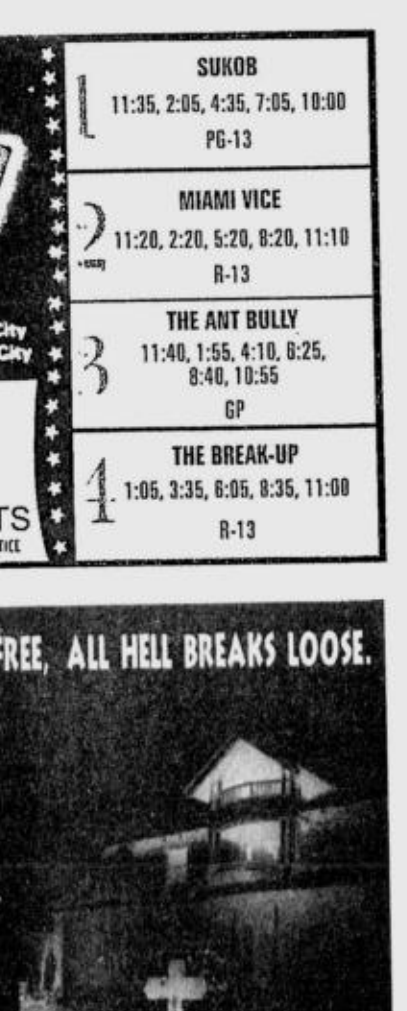
DOLBY DIGITAL
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
For inquiries, call: 687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 SUKOB 11:35, 2:05, 4:35, 7:05, 10:00 PG-13
2 (DTS) MIAMI VICE 11:20, 2:20, 5:20, 8:20, 11:10 R-13
3 THE ANT BULLY 11:40, 1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:40, 10:55 GP
4 THE BREAK-UP 1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00 R-13

WHEN THE DEAD BREAK FREE, ALL HELL BREAKS LOOSE.
From horror master TOBE HOOPER, director of the original *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Poltergeist*, comes his next installment of terror...



MORTUARY
OPENS AUGUST 16
R-13

How will the migration of some of the best and brightest teachers affect the future of education in the Philippines?

SHOOTING OUTDOORS in Cagayan de Oro.

From page G1

Philippines. I was invited to film the recruitment process—and they eventually recruited close to 100 teachers for the fall of 2006.

"My interest in the film really lies in the struggles that these women go through to come to this country—the sacrifices, the lure of the American Dream, the realities they face once they get here, the big cultural chasm that exists between the Philippines and the US, the human toll it takes to make life better economically and the loneliness.

"It is a modern-day story of immigration. But at the end of the day, these are women who are dedicated teachers and they come to really care for their mostly African-American students. This is my other interest in the film: the relations they forge with their students. At first they are totally unprepared for each other, not understanding a word of each other's version of English.

"But as the year progresses, an unexpected relationship unfolds in the classrooms: Several African-American students begin to bond with their Filipino teachers. They are strangers to each other but the very unfamiliarity of these not-quite-identifiable Asian women is opening up the black students. Neither white nor black, the teachers carry none of the historical or cultural baggage of authority figures at school or at home.

"Whether teachers imported from the Philippines will prove to be part of the solution to America's struggling education system remains unclear. And just outside the frame of the film lingers a shadowy question: How will the migration of some of the best and brightest teachers affect the future of education in the Philippines?

DIAZ pauses for a snapshot.

PHOTOS BY ERROL AFED

"Research and development money came from the Center for Asian American Media (formerly NAATA, which also funded 'Imelda') and funding came from the Sundance Documentary Fund. Sundance has been very supportive of my work, ever since 'Imelda' which was not only screened at the festival but was also a product of their funding and of their workshops. I am looking forward to collaborating with them once more. In addition, Tony Gloria is an executive producer on the film."

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

ENTOURAGE

HBO Emmys

THIS MONTH, HBO SUBSCRIBERS CAN watch the complete first seasons of five award-winning series—"Curb Your Enthusiasm" (Mondays), "Huff" (Wednesdays), "Deadwood" (Thursdays), "Rome" (Fridays) and "Entourage" (Tuesdays). The series airs at 9 p.m.

"Curb Your Enthusiasm" proves how seemingly trivial details of one's life can precipitate a Murphy's Law chain of misfortune to hilarious effect. "Huff" is about a successful psychiatrist who spirals into a mid-life crisis after a death of a patient during therapy session.

"Deadwood" is a notorious camp in the Black Hills of South Dakota and the epicenter of the gold rush. "Rome" is an epic drama of love and betrayal, masters and slaves and husbands and wives.

"Entourage" is a comedy series that takes a look at the day-to-day life of a hot young actor in modern-day Hollywood and his entourage.

'Showdown' extended

AVID viewers of "Rock Star: Supernova" on Star World can still bring their rock and roll dream to life.

Rockers can give the best rendition of the rock song of their choice which may be performed a cappella or accompanied by live music or minus one cassette.

To qualify, contestants must be between 18-35 years old, an amateur singer with no recording history or professional performing background, and have a valid passport and US visa.

Demo tapes in audio cassette and video format (VHS, VCD or DVD) may be sent to Stratworks, 7/F RCI Bldg., 105 Rada St., Legaspi Village, Makati City 1229. Videos must be accompanied by a duly accomplished application form which may requested by calling 817-9558.

Log on to www.startv.com/rockstar/showdown for more details.

Award for TFC

ABS-CBN Global's The Filipino Channel (TFC) recently won its second silver trophy in the Promax World Gold Award at the 2006 Promax and BDA International Conference held in Marriott Marquis, New York.

Often referred to as the "Oscars of the Broadcast Industry," the award signifies world-class achievement for excellence in television promotion.

TFC received the honor for the concept and music of its current station ID, a two-minute music video tribute to overseas Filipino workers.

ROUNDUP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX

SUKOB PG 1:15,3:25,5:35,7:45,10:00	MIAMI VICE R13 1:50,4:40,7:30,10:20	ANT BULLY G 11:30,1:40,3:50, 6:00,8:10,10:10
ANT BULLY G 1:10,3:20,5:30 BREAK-UP R13 7:50,10:10	WOLFCREEK R18 12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	MIAMI VICE R13 11:30,2:20,5:10,8:00

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440#1
MATINEE PHP 111.00 – SCREENINGS BEFORE 5:00 PM – MONDAY-FRIDAY

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CINEMA 1 SUKOB 10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00 PG-13
CINEMA 2 WOLF CREEK 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 8:50 R-18
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 MIAMI VICE 11:05, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:35 R13
CINEMA 4 MIAMI VICE 10:35, 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 10:00 R13
CINEMA 5 ANT BULLY 10:45, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 GP
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM
AUG. 11, 2006 Simply SITTI 9:00PM
AUG. 17,18,24,25 & 31 GARY V 8:00PM
TEATRINO PROMENADE GREENHILLS
EVERY MONDAY DANCE NIGHT 7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY CERRUDO CLASSICO 8:00PM
AUG. 24 2006 DAVID POMERANZ 9:00PM
FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722-4532 LOC 116
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL: 721-6726 OR 721-0635

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MIAMI VICE 1:10 / 4:10 / 7:10 / 10:10	ANT BULLY 12:55 / 2:20 / 4:35 / 6:50 / 9:05	TAMARA 2:30 / 4:40 / 6:50 / 9:00	Gateway PLATINUM CINEMA
SUKOB 12:55 / 3:05 / 5:15 / 7:25 / 9:35	WOLF CREEK 12:50 / 3:05 / 5:20 / 7:35 / 9:50	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50	ANT BULLY 11:30 / 1:45 / 4:00
DOLBY DIGITAL EX	JUST MY LUCK 2:15 / 4:45 / 7:15 / 9:45	THE BREAK - UP 12:40 / 2:55 / 5:10 / 7:25 / 9:40	MIAMI VICE 6:00 / 9:00

MALL 5

MIAMI VICE 12:05 R4 / 2:05 / 5:05 / 8:05	ANT BULLY 12:55 / 3:10 / 5:25 / 7:40	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:10 R3 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30
SUKOB 12:10 R2 / 2:00 / 4:10 / 6:20 / 8:30	WOLF CREEK 12:05 R3 / 1:40 / 3:55 / 6:10 / 8:25	DOLBY DIGITAL DTS SDDS

LOG ON TO WWW.ARANETACENTER.NET FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS
Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777
THX

G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 THE ANT BULLY	2 MIAMI VICE	3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	4 SUKOB
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 THE ANT BULLY	2 JUST MY LUCK	3 THX MIAMI VICE 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE PRODUCERS	5 WOLF CREEK	6 SUKOB	7 THE BREAK-UP
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SUKOB		2 MIAMI VICE	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE ANT BULLY 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX MIAMI VICE 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 JUST MY LUCK 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE BREAK-UP 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SUKOB 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MIAMI VICE		2 SUKOB	
	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	5 THE BREAK-UP	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SUKOB	2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 LOVEWRECKED
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 SUKOB		2 WOLF CREEK	
	3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	4 MIAMI VICE	5 THE ANT BULLY	

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272; from 10am to 8pm; Greenbelt - 752 4853; from 11am to 12mn; Alabang Town Center - 842 2782; from 10am to 8pm; Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324; Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Hondaworld 2006 August 2 to 6, 2006	Automatic Center Exhibit August 1 to 11, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
The Golden Weekend August 6, 2006	2006 Addidas Street Ball Challenge August 5 & 6, 2006
GREENBELT	Jazz Nights at GB 2 July 26, 2006
Onstage	Repertory Philippines presents Walt Disney's ALADDIN JR. at REP's Globe Theater - Aug. 12, 20, 26, Sept. 3, 9, Oct. 14 & 22 For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710
Ayala MUSEUM	Ode To The Pasig River June 27 to August 27, 2006 For inquiries, please call 757-7117 to 21 loc 29 or visit www.ayalamuseum.org

the antBULLY™

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August 18 • 3pm and 6 pm
August 19-20 • 11am, 3pm and 6pm
Customer Service Hotline: 842-2782, 772-1860

Ayala Center Cebu Activity Center
August 11 • 3pm and 6pm
August 12-13 • 11am, 3pm and 6pm
Customer Service Hotline: (032) 231 5342 loc 324

Market! Market! Activity Center
August 22-24 • 3pm and 6 pm
Customer Service Hotline: 886 7519

glorietta ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET!

PAROKYA NI EDGAR

MARK HERRAS

SHOW TIME

AJ DEE

YASMIEN KURDI

'Ride with the Stars'

FANS ARE INVITED TO STAR CITY'S "RIDE with the Stars," featuring Mike Tan, LJ Reyes, Benj Pacia and Krizzy Jareno on Aug. 13, Rainier Castillo and Yasmien Kurdi on August 20 and Mark Herras and Jennylyn Mercado on Aug. 27.

Live interviews with the stars are set on the same dates over Manila Broadcasting Company stations dzRH, YES-FM and Love Radio. Raffle draws, photo-ops and meet-and-greet sessions are also scheduled. A mini concert showcasing the featured stars caps each day.

Star City is open from 4 p.m. onwards on Fridays and 1 p.m. onwards on Saturdays and Sundays. Tickets are P40 for entrance and P190 for Ride-All-You-Can tags.

Amy & AJ onstage

Amy Perez and AJ Dee play central characters in the Greek tragedy, Sophocles' "Oedipus the King," ongoing at the Cultural Center of the Philippines until Sept. 10.

Mel Magno directs.. Also in the cast are Vince Kuipers, also as Oedipus and, in some performances, Creon; Chiqui Xerez Burgos as the blind prophet Tiresias; and Edwin Decenteceo as Creon. Call 435-1120 or email backroomtalents@pldtdsl.net.

Today

• Romantic piano concert featuring **Ingrid Sala Sta. Maria** and **Reynaldo G. Reyes** at **StarMall Las Piñas**, until Aug. 12.

Tomorrow

• A dance showdown at **Jools Club**, P. Burgos St., **Makati**. Interested dancers may call 897-9097 or 897-9098 until tomorrow, look for May. The preliminary round is set Aug. 13, 7 p.m., at Jools. Five groups will be chosen to compete for the finals on Aug. 19. Cash prizes await the winners.

Aug. 8

• **Nyco Maka** performs at **'70s Bistro.**

Aug. 9

• **Wunjo** at **'70s Bistro.**

Aug. 10

• **Ambassadors** back to back with **Itchyworms, '70s Bistro.**

• **Randy Santiago** at **Ratsky's Malate** . Repeats Aug. 24 and 31.

Aug. 11

• **Karylle** at **Ratsky's Malate.** Repeats Aug. 18 and 25 at Ratsky's Malate. Call 523-8608-09.

Aug 12

• **Spy, '70s Bistro.**

Aug. 13

• **Anton Diva** at the **Metropolis Star Alabang**, 4 p.m.

Aug 17

• **Cueshe with Jeazell** at **Ratsky's Malate.**

Aug 19

Magic of Erik Mana at Ratsky's Malate.

Aug. 21

RAINIER CASTILLO

LJ REYES

CUESHE

• Parokya ni Edgar, '70s Bistro.

Aug. 23

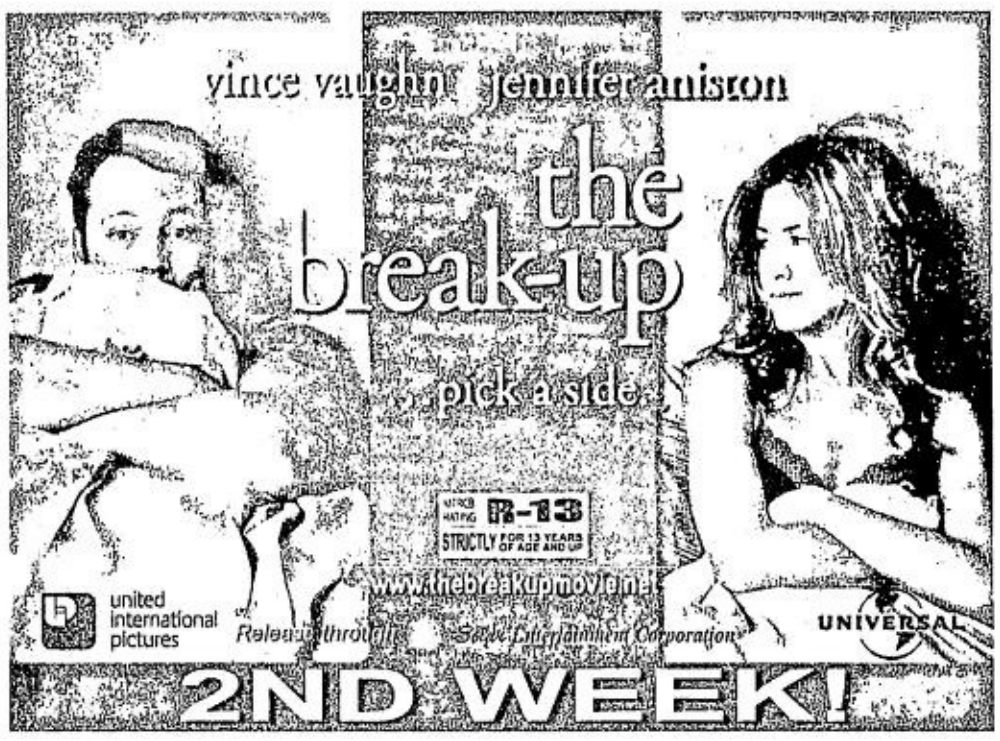
• Orange and Lemons, '70s Bistro.

Aug.24

• Cooky Chua and Mike Villegas, '70s Bistro. Call 434-3597 or 0917-8256078.

Aug. 27

Top Suzara will have an album mall tour on Aug. 27 at 4 p.m., Starmall Edsa.



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SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F Trinity Bldg., 636 T.M. Kalaw St., Manila
☎ 5273342 ☎ 5280183 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
Alabang, Muntinlupa City
☎ 8424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6, 2006

H1

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT
KAPIT-BISIG LABAN SA KAHIRAPAN -
COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED DELIVERY OF SOCIAL SERVICES (KALAHI-CIDSS)

(the flagship anti-poverty project of the Government of the Philippines implemented by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), with funding support from the World Bank),

is in need of

11 Community-Driven Development (CDD) Process Specialists

to be deployed in regions CAR, 4B, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, and Caraga

Tasks and Functions:

1. Convene regular meetings with municipal Area Coordinating Teams (ACT) for action planning, implementation and performance review, tactic sessions for problem resolution, and reflection sessions to identify lessons and best practices in field implementation.
2. Review the consistency of ACT intervention plans with CDD principles and with the standards set by the Regional Project Management Team (RPMT).
3. Conduct purposive capability building of ACTs. In coordination with the Regional Training Unit, determine training needs, develop and administer a capability-building plan that includes formal training, team building, coaching, mentoring, task demonstration, peer sharing, tactic session, focused group discussions, and other approaches.
4. Coordinate regional Technical Assistance (TA) provision to ACTs, establish TA delivery systems and procedures, and facilitate timely TA provision to ACT members and field implementers on CO – CD, local governance, participatory development planning, and convergence and institutionalization.
5. Provide policy recommendations to the RPMT and technical assistance to organic staff on implementing CDD interventions and in realizing the department's mandate on community development.
6. Prepare a process monitoring plan, in consultation with other members of the RPMT, and monitor the implementation of the Project's development processes and interventions through report review, field visits, and spot checks.
7. Prepare process documentation reports, consolidate AC monitoring reports, and submit the same to the Regional Project Manager and the NPMO.
8. Facilitate periodic summing-up of ACT field implementation experience. Generate lessons, strategies, and best practices in field implementation, and ensure that these are disseminated and utilized to enhance operations.
9. Perform other related tasks that may be assigned by the Regional Project Manager.

Qualification Standards:

1. Graduate of any social development related course, preferably at the masteral level;
2. At least seven (7) years of progressive experience in community organizing and development work, three years of which should be in foreign-assisted projects (FAPs).
3. Demonstrated capability to formulate and execute strategies to propel CDD programs with multiple components such as (i) LGU engagement, (ii) local development planning, (iii) convergence, (iv) community mobilization and social inclusion, and (v) institutional reforms.
4. Excellent grasp of national and region-specific poverty conditions, current anti-poverty initiatives, and different approaches to poverty reduction.
5. Excellent written and oral communication skills in English and Filipino, and in the local language where he/she will be deployed.
6. Highly literate in MS Office applications.

Application Requirements:

a. Application letter indicating where you want to be posted and briefly stating how you meet each of the qualification standards (maximum of 2 pages)
b. Latest CV
c. One writing sample (either field notes or field report, maximum of 5 pages)
d. A list of references (with full contact details) from the last three previous employers

Interested applicants must submit all of the above to: the **Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat** at 2nd floor, DSWD, Batasan Pambansa Complex, Constitution Hills, Quezon City with telephone number 931-8101 loc 217/951-71-16 (Fax), e-mail: bacsec@dswd.gov.ph; dswdbacsec@yahoo.com, on or before 15 August 2006.

(Sgd.) **FLORITA R. VILLAR**
Assistant Secretary and Chairperson, BAC

REAL ESTATE ROADSHOWS IN WEST COAST, USA

Orange County • Las Vegas • San Diego Los Angeles • Houston, Texas

(September 16 to October 1, 2006)

ORIENTATION MEETING

is on **Friday, the 11th of August 2006**
2:00 p.m. at 4/F CREBA Center,
Don A. Roces Avenue cor. South 'A' Street,
Quezon City (RSVP).

For more details, please contact:
CHAMBER OF REAL ESTATE & BUILDERS' ASSOCIATIONS, INC. (CREBA)
Tels: +632 3732270 to 75 • Fax: +632 3732271/74 • Email: creba_inc@yahoo.com

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WANTED
Receptionist
for Medium size Law firm
w/ pleasing personality,
fluent in English and must be single
Apply at: 3rd Flr. LCS Bldg.
South Superhighway cor. San Andres
and Diamante Sts., Manila

A multinational Company is in need of:
SALES EXECUTIVES

- Male/Female, at least 23 years old
- College graduate
- At least 2 years experience in selling finishing materials
- Hardworking & willing to travel
- With driver's license
- Can start immediately
- Preferably with vehicle

Interested candidates please forward or e-mail your application to the address below. Only qualified applicants will be notified.

HR Department
WHITE HORSE CERAMIC (PHIL.) INC.
Lietz Industrial Complex, Edison Ave.,
KM. 14 Parañaque City
Tel: 822-3381 Fax: 821-2135

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING, ANY OF THE FF:
SALESMAN • DRIVER • FINISHING CARPENTER
Male, between 20-25 years old
Bring bio-data with 2x2 picture
Call: PHILIP
Tel.: 733-53-27; 733-53-40

Southeast Asian College, Inc.
#2 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., Quezon City
COLLEGE OF RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGY

CONGRATULATIONS!

Dennis G. Maximo, RRT
2nd Placer

Victor Michael P. Cañon, RRT
11th Placer

Radiologic Technology Examination Professional Regulation Commission
Board of Radiologic Technology June 14–15, 2006

Other SACI Board passers:

Bonganay, Rudy G.
Colcol, Peter Nicholas H.

SACI Ranking:
#3 out 12 schools in the Metro Manila
#11 out of 43 schools in the Country

From:
SACI Administration,
Faculty & Students!

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Eastern Samar
Municipality of Can-Avid

Invitation for Bids (IFB)

Date: August 6, 2006
Contract ID No.: SP-041-IN-02
World Bank Loan No.: 4446 PH

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development towards the cost of Local Government Finance and Development and intends to apply part of the funds to cover eligible payments under the Contract for the *Construction of River Protection*. Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the *Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits*.
2. The *Municipality of Can-Avid, Eastern Samar* invites sealed bids from eligible sources for the *Construction of River Protection, consisting of various sections as follows:*
   a. *Barangay Can-Ilay* – *150 linear meters*
   b. *Barangay Camantang* – *150 linear meters*
   c. *Barangay Mabuhay* – *132 linear meters*
   d. *Barangay Canteros* – *150 linear meters*
   e. *Barangay Carolina* – *160 linear meters*
3. Bidding documents may be purchased starting *August 7, 2006* at *BAC Office during office hours at Office of the Municipal Treasurer, Can-Avid, Eastern Samar* upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of *Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00)* or its equivalent in a freely-convertible currency, for each set. Interested bidders may obtain further information at the same address.
4. Bids shall be valid for a period of *ninety (90) days* after bid opening and must be accompanied by bid security of *Four Hundred Sixty Five Thousand pesos (Php 465,000.00)* in a form of cash, certified check, bank guarantee or its equivalent in a convertible currency and shall be delivered to the *Municipal Engineer's Office, Ground Floor, Municipal Building, Can-Avid, Eastern Samar* on or *before September 5, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at which time they will be opened in the presence of the bidders who wish to attend.*
5. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post qualification. The *Approved Budget Cost (ABC)* for the subproject is *Eighteen Million Six Hundred Sixty Two Thousand Pesos (Php 18,662,000.00).*
6. A pre-bid conference will be held at 10:00 A.M. on August 17, 2006 at the SB Conference Hall Municipal Building, Can-Avid, Eastern Samar.

(Sgd.) Engr. Joseph H. Busa
BAC Chairman

(PDI–August 6, 2006)

Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corporation
A Global Corporation with a Global Mindset and a Filipino Heart

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB NO.: 07-14-2006

The Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corporation (PAGCOR) is inviting all Private Security Agencies in its forthcoming public bidding for the project stated hereunder:

Name of Project: Five (5) lots Private Security Agency Services

LOT	LOCATION/BRANCH	NO. OF GUARDS	APPROVED BUDGET	BIDDING FEE
1	Airport Casino	74 (SG-56 / LG-18)	Twenty Six Million Six Hundred Ninety Seven Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty & 96/100 (Php 26,697,880.96)	Thirteen Thousand Three Hundred Forty Eight & 94/100 (Php 13,348.94)
2	Heritage	50 (SG-38 / LG-12)	Eighteen Million Thirty Nine Thousand One Hundred Eight & 76/100 (Php 18,039,108.76)	Nine Thousand Nineteen & 55/100 (Php 9,019.55)
3	Hyatt	42 (SG-30 / LG-12)	Fifteen Million One Hundred Fifty Two Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty One & 36/100 (Php 15,152,851.36)	Seven Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Six & 42/100 (Php 7,576.42)
4	Pavilion	73 (SG-55 / LG-18)	Twenty Six Million Three Hundred Thirty Seven Thousand Ninety Eight & 78/100 (Php 26,337,098.78)	Thirteen Thousand One Hundred Sixty Eight & 55/100 (Php 13,168.55)
5	Tagaytay	42 (SG-36 / LG-6)	Twelve Million Twenty Seven Thousand Six Hundred Sixty One & 12/100 (Php 12,027,661.12)	Six Thousand Thirteen & 83/100 (Php 6,013.83)

NOTE: Bidders should bid for one (1) lot only.
Contract Duration : Two (2) years
Source of Fund : Internally Funded

Only contractors duly registered with PAGCOR shall be allowed to participate in the bidding. Unregistered contractors must register at the Suppliers Registration & Evaluation Section (SRES), Procurement & Property Department (PPD), 2nd Floor PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila., Tel. No. 526-0573.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 28, 2006 – August 18, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	August 8, 2006 (10 am)
3. Submission of Bids	August 21, 2006 (2 pm)
4. Opening of Bid	August 21, 2006 (2 pm onwards)

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee stated above. In order to secure the documents, bidders should present the Official Receipt issued by our Cashier to the BAC Secretariat Unit, PAGCOR House, 1330 Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila.

PAGCOR assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

PAGCOR reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

Please address all communications to the BAC Secretariat Unit, Procurement & Property Department.

(Sgd) RENE C. FIGUEROA
Chairperson, BAC 2

(PDI-July 30 & Aug 6, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philippine Sugar Center Building
North Avenue, Diliman
Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF TWO (2) UNITS NFA HELICOPTERS

The National Food Authority Central Office invites all interested parties to bid for the following NFA Helicopters:

	Lot 1	Lot 2
Brand	Construzoini Aeronautiche Giovanni	Bell Helicopter Textron
Model Number	AGUSTA 109A	Bell 206B
Serial No.	7184	259
Year Manufactured	1980	1968
Registration No.	RP-609	RP-1997
Specifications	8 seater, including 2 pilots, 4 main rotor blades, powered by 420 HP single turbine, engine Allison Model 250-C20B, Serial Nos. CAE-832080 and CAE-832146, complete with standard avionics With certificate of Registration valid until September 2, 2007	6 seater, including 2 pilots, 4-blade propeller, powered by 400 shp single turbine engine Allison Model 250-C20, Serial No. CAE-823181, complete with standard avionics With expired Certificate of Registration, Airworthiness, grounded since May 2003.
Minimum Bid Price	TWENTY ONE MILLION PESOS (P21,000,000.00)	FIVE MILLION PESOS (P5,000,000.00)

Bid proposals shall be on "as-is-where-is basis. Offerors shall be required to post a bid security equivalent to one percent (1%) of the total amount based on his/her bid offer. It shall either be in the form of cash, manager's check or cashier's check payable to NFA.

Bid documents, such as tender form, including terms and conditions shall be issued only to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable / non-transferable fee of P20,000.00 not later than 2:00 p.m. on August 25, 2006. For further details, you may contact the BAC Secretariat at telephone number 455-2758.

Activities relative to this bidding shall be held at the NFA Boardroom, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

Pre-Bid Conference — September 1, 2006, 2:00 p.m.
Receipt and Opening of Bids — September 13, 2006
Submission of Bids — 1:00 p.m. to 1:45 p.m.
Opening of Bids — 2:00 p.m.

NFA reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any defects or informalities found therein and accept only such bids which in its judgment are most reasonable and advantageous to NFA. The decision of the Committee as confirmed by the BAC Chairman shall be deemed final.

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator & BAC Chairperson

(PDI – July 30 & August 6, 2006)

ATTENTION: DOCTORS

LIFEMED CLINICS & Laboratories, Inc. has available clinic rooms for rent at affordable rates! Located in the heart of Makati, we provide excellent parking, with Laboratory, X-Ray & Ultrasound services.

We are looking for the following doctors:

INTERNAL MEDICINE • OB-GYNECOLOGIST • OPHTHALMOLOGY / OPTOMETRIST • ENT-HNS • FAMILY MEDICINE

For inquiries, call us at (02) 843-2193 / 887-6384 or email your resumes to rfs_lifemed@yahoo.com.ph

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JOB Market COMPACT **Check out more jobs from Jobmarket Compact every Wednesday.** *Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.* JOB Market

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City
is now accepting application for
Academic Year 2007

FELLOWSHIPS:

I. Pediatric Cardiovascular Medicine Department
- 3 years Residency in General Pediatric accredited by PPS
- at least passed written examination for Diplomate in Pediatrics

II. CV Anesthesiology Division
- 3 years Residency in General Anesthesia accredited by PBA (Board eligible)

III. Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery Division
- 3 years Residency in General Surgery accredited by PCS (Board eligible)

RESIDENCES: (For Medical Board Passers)

I. CV Radiological Sciences Division

II. Biological and Clinical Laboratory Division

III. Nuclear Medicine Division
- 1 year Fellowship Program is available for the above Residencies

General Requirements:
1. Medical Diploma
2. Transcript of Records with the General Weighted Average
3. Itemized Board Rating
4. Three (3) Letters of Recommendation (with at least one letter written by the Training Officer &/or Director of the previous Training Programs (duplicate letters or photocopies signed by different Doctors will not be accepted)
5. Four (4) pcs. 2"x2" picture colored
6. Certificate of Residency

- Deadline for submission of application is on August 31, 2006
- Academic Year 2006 starts on January 1, 2007

Please address your communications to:
ARISTIDES G. PANLILIO, M.D.
Department Manager
Department of Education, Training and Research
Philippine Heart Center
East Avenue, Quezon City

For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Carmela M. Ocasion or Ms. Cleopatra Q. Palencia with Tel. Nos. 925-2401 locals 3234, 3235, 3236, 3237 and Telefax 926-9622, or you can email to oer@phc.gov.ph

(PDI – July 16, 22, 23, 29, 30 Aug 6, 7, 13, 14, 20, 21, 27 & 28, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
National Electrification Administration
Needed Immediately
GENERAL MANAGER
for
SULU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (SULECO)
Jolo, Sulu

Qualifications:
- 30-50 YEARS OLD
- Male or Female
- Graduate of Business Administration, Engineering (Electrical, Mechanical, ECE), Accounting, Finance, Management or Behavioral Science
- With Master's Degree or Post-Graduate Degree preferred
- Must have at least five (5) years managerial experience in a utility-related business enterprise
- Computer literate
- Must be willing to relocate with his/her family in Jolo, Sulu

Starting Salary: P25,000.00

Application forms and additional information may be obtained from the Institutional Development Department, 6th Floor, NEA Building, NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of application form is on 15 August 2006.

(Sgd.) EDITA S. BUENO
Administrator

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City

ERRATUM

to the

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF TWO (2) UNITS HELICOPTERS

In connection with the Invitation to bid published last Sunday, July 30, 2006, please be guided that the **bid security to be posted by prospective offerors is ten percent (10%) of the total amount of his/her bid offer** and NOT one percent (1%) as published.

Please be guided accordingly.

(Sgd.) **PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.**
Deputy Administrator
and BAC Chairperson

(PDI–August 6, 2006)

Check out more jobs from JobMarket Compact every Wednesday

JOB Market
JOB COMPACT

Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
GUAGUA, PAMPANGA

August 4, 2006

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF BIDDERS

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) WITH OFFICE ADDRESS AT SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA IS INVITING ELIGIBLE BIDDERS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THE FOLLOWING PACKAGES:

Package 1:
A. Supply, Delivery and Construction of Single Phase Distribution Line at Balas, Bacolor, Pampanga as per Staking/ Requirement of Engineering Department of this office.

Package 2: (Supply and Delivery)
A. Read and Bill Equipment (Electronic) with Thermal Printer - 50 units
Note: Thermal Paper Size – 3 inches

Package 3: (Supply and Delivery)
A. Computer Set - 30 units
   a. CPU's Specification
      3.0 Ghz, 512 Mb Memory, 40Gb Hard Disk 72 rpm
      Video Card, Lan Card, CD-RW Drive
   b. Monitor 17" with keyboard & mouse
   c. Windows XP Professional License
B. UPS - (Un-interrupted Power Supply) Max. 10 minutes - 30 units

You are therefore invited for the pre-bid conference on August 9, 2006 (Wednesday) 10:00 A.M. at PELCO II Board Room San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga wherein there will be a technical and financial orientation and discussion in the preparation for the bidding proper scheduled on August 10, 2006 (Thursday) at 10:00 a.m.

Please be informed that non-attendance on the scheduled pre-bid conference is an outright disqualification for those bidders who would want to join the bidding.

All bidders are required to secure bidding documents on the scheduled pre-bid conference with the amount to be determined based on confirmed number of bidders.

All bidders are required to be accredited with this office with an accreditation fee (non-refundable) of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00). In addition to accreditation fee, all bidders are required to submit the following documents:
1. Company's Profile
2. Latest ITR
3. Audited Financial Statement
4. Business or Mayor's Permit
5. DTI Registration
6. SEC Registration

For more information please see/ contact Engr. Raul L. Canlas at PELCO II Office or dial number at (045) 900-2650.

(Sgd.) ENGR. RAUL L. CANLAS
PBAC Chairperson

Noted by:
(Sgd.) MR. SULPICIO C. LAGARDE JR.
General Manager

(PDI–Aug. 6 & 7, 2006)

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THE LARGEST USED CAR LOAN BANK IN THE COUNTRY TODAY

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TOP CAR LOAN BANK
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SPECIAL INTEREST
RATE AS LOW AS
7% p.a.
ACCEPTABLE YEAR MODELS
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AMA BANK CAR - LATERAL LOAN
Cash Loan Using Your CAR AS COLLATERAL!

Fast Processing and Check release.
For more details Pls. call at Tel. Nos.
413-5777 / 372-6698 / 372-6526 / 373-9913
416-8144/416-8145/373-3901 loc. 8302/8303/8220

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

GERALDINE REMOLANO

Please be informed that the person whose name and picture appears above has been separated from **MANPOWER RESOURCES OF ASIA, INC.** located at # 2598 DCL House Bldg. Manchas St., Brgy. Sta. Cruz, Makati City, telephone number 899-9958. Any transactions made by this person for and in behalf of **MANPOWER RESOURCES OF ASIA, INC.** will not be honored.

(PDI – August 6, 2006)

DAVAO CITY WATER DISTRICT
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada Davao City
Tel. No. 221-9400

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1. The *Davao City Water District*, with the *Approved Budget 2006* intends to apply the sum of ***Fifteen Million Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (P15,600,000.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to Payments under the contract for 1/2" ***Water Meter.*** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *Davao City Water District* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for:

ABC: Php 15,600,000.00

a) 15,600 pcs. – 1/2" (15mm)Ø Water Meter

The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/ sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from *Davao City Water District* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 a.m. up to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of ***P 5,000.00/package***. The method of payment will be on Cash Basis. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The *Davao City Water District* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 25, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M.*** at ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.***
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***Sept. 6, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of *cash or Manager's check* and in the amount of **P156,000.00.** Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on ***Sept. 6, 2006 at 9:00 o'clock A.M.*** at ***DCWD BAC-A Secretariat Office, J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City.*** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. The *Davao City Water District* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Davao City Water District
BAC-A
J.P. Laurel Ave., Bajada, Davao City
221-9400 (8000)
dcwd@davao-water.gov.ph
224-5392
www.davao-water.gov.ph

(Sgd.) VIRGINIA S. MARIMON
BAC-A Chairperson

(PDI–August 6 & 13, 2006)

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project / Location / Brief Description	**Supply and delivery of approximately 46,620 bottles of 5-gallon bottled purified water (no spill and non-reusable cap), including free use and maintenance of hot and cold non-spill type/nozzle type dispensers, for the BSP Main Complex and the Security Plant Complex personnel for a period of one (1) year, per BSP specifications**
Approved Budget for the Contract	**P2,331,000.00**
Contract Period	**One (1) year effective upon execution of contract**

Prospective bidders should have undertaken similar project within the last five (5) years amounting to at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	4 August – 24 August 2006 up to 2:00 PM only
2. Pre-bid Conference	25 August 2006, 3:00 PM
3. Opening of Bids	12 September 2006, 2:00PM
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P1,170.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – August 6, 2006)

ECOP GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

New members of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (ECOP) were inducted by ECOP President Rene Soriano (7th from right) in the recent General Membership Meeting. The occasion was graced by Labor Undersecretary Manuel Imson (8th from right) who delivered a speech in behalf of Labor Secretary Arturo Brion. Also shown in photo is ECOP Chair Miguel Varela (9th from right) who is flanked by the new members.

2006 Hands-On Choral Workshop at the CCP

Hands-On Choral Workshop

THE CULTURAL Center of the Philippines (CCP) is now accepting applications for the 2006 Hands-On Choral Workshop which will be held in various venues of the CCP on Oct. 24-28, (Tuesday-Saturday) from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The workshop is an intensive choral clinic open to amateur choirs and conductors who wish to develop their skills in choral singing and conducting.

The workshop trainors are members and alumni of the world-renowned Philippine Madrigal Singers.

The workshop sessions include vocalization techniques, sectional rehearsals, conducting techniques for conductors, individual choir sessions, note reading sessions and plenary sessions.

Its culminating concert will be held at the CCP Main Theater on Saturday, Oct. 28, 2006 at 3:30 p.m. This highly regarded annual workshop has produced winners in local and international choral competitions.

Due to the very limited slots available, registration will be on a first-come-first served basis. Please contact the CCP Music Division at 832-2414 (direct line) or 8321125 loc. 1604/1605 for more information.

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND DEVELOPMENT
Field Office VIII, Tacloban City

KALAHI-CIDSS

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Department of Social Welfare and Development has opened the application for positions for Phase IV of the Kapit – Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan – Comprehensive and Integrated Delivery of Social Services: kapangyarihan at Kaunlaran sa Barangay (KALAHI – CIDSS:KKB)

KALAHI – CIDSS is a community - based poverty reduction project that aims to empower communities through their enhanced participation in the barangay governance and involvement in the design, implementation and management of development activities that reduce poverty.

Phase IV, of the project begins in August 2006, covering the areas of Northern Samar, Biliran and Leyte.

The following positions are open for application:

1. 15 AREA COORDINATORS (AC) positions

The Qualification requirements for the position are the following:

1. Graduate of Social Work, Community Development, Social Sciences of Social Development Course.
2. Have at least 5 years experience in community work and 16 hours of relevant training
3. Highly develop skills for facilitating (meetings, consultations, discussions, reflection sessions, etc) and community mobilization.
4. Believes that government has capacity to do empowerment work.
5. Has good analytical skills and comprehension of poverty situations and development of interventions and strategies
6. Creative, resourceful, able to work with groups, flexible and non-traditional, have pleasant disposition;
7. Manifest commitment and dedication in community driven and development work, willing to stay in municipality of assignment
8. Actively involved in community organizing and development

2. 83 COMMUNITY FACILITATORS (CF) position

The qualification requirements for the position are the following:

1. Graduate of community Development course, Social Work or Social Sciences
2. At least 2 years experience in community work, preferably in rural areas
3. Highly developed skills for facilitating (meetings, consultations, discussions, reflection sessions, etc.)
4. Believes that government has capacity to do empowerment work.
5. Has good analytical skills and comprehension poverty situation at the barangay level and quick at facilitating strategic planning.
6. Creative, resourceful, able to work with groups, flexible and non-traditional, have pleasant disposition;
7. Willing to stay in the barangay or community, able to speak dealect of barangay assignment
8. Actively involved in community organizing and development

3. 22 MUNICIPAL ROVING BOOKKEEPER (MRB) position

The qualification requirements for the position are the following:

1. Bachelor's degree holder preferably Accountancy
2. Have at least 1 year experience in accounting and bookkeeping work
3. Excellent diligence and detail in bookkeeping task
4. Attention and patience for details in regular posting of transactions
5. Neatness and organization in record keeping

4. 22 DEPUTY AREA COORDINATORS (DAC) position

The qualification requirements for the position are the following:

1. Licensed Civil Engineer (RA 1080) with a minimum of two years technical experience in community infra project implementation specifically:
   - Site-level construction supervision
   - Review project design, cost and quantity estimates
   - Environmental screening of infra projects
   - Project implementation by contract or force account
   - Labor-intensive construction methods
   - Maintenance of community infrastructure projects
2. With working knowledge of project implementation, coordination with national government agencies and local government agencies and local government units
3. At least 2 years experience in foreign assisted government infra projects and 16 hours relevant training.

Those who meet the qualification requirements of the said positions may apply to the OIC Regional Director not later that **August 10, 2006.**

Interested parties are advised to submit the following documents:

1. Application Letter;
2. Resumé with recent 2x2 ID picture;
3. Authenticated transcript of Records; and
4. Diploma

(Sgd.) LETICIA T. CORILLO
OIC – Regional Director

(PDI-July 30 & Aug 6, 2006)

PAMBANSANG PANGASIWAAN SA PAGKAIN
NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY

Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE (BAC) SECRETARIAT OFFICE
Tel. No. (632) 455-2758 e-mail: vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of Tokens for the Year 2006 NFA Service Awardees

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*, through its *2006 Corporate Operating Budget* intends to apply the sum of P1,114,234.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *supply and delivery of wristwatches for 2006 service awardees, as follows:*

LOT No.	Particulars	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)
1	166 pieces wristwatches, Model A	109,560.00
2	601 pieces wristwatches, Model B	489,214.00
3	355 pieces wristwatches, Model C	515,460.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the *supply and delivery of wristwatches for 2006 NFA service awardees.* Delivery is required within 30 days from receipt of Purchase Order. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, **Instruction to Bidders (ITB).**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY-BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE SECRETARIAT and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 PM

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address given below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 5,000.00. The method of payment will be *CASH.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 23, 2006 at 10:00 a.m.*** at the ***NFA Conference Room, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.***

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the *NFA Conference Room, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City. on September 6, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.* Late Bids shall not be accepted. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the following form and amount.

FORM OF SECURITY	Required Amount in Percent of ABC
Cash, cashier's Check, Manager's Check, Bank draft or Irrevocable Letter of Credit	One percent (1%)
Bank Guarantee	One and a half percent (1.5%)
Surety Bond stamped "Callable on Demand" on the face of the Bond issued by GSIS.	Two and a half percent (2.5%)
Any combination of the above.	Proportionate to share

Bid opening shall be on September 6, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the ***NFA Conference Room, 6th floor, Philsugin Bldg., North Avenue, Quezon City.*** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives.

The *NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Procuring Entity	–	*NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY*
Contact Person	–	*Jose D. Chua / Violeta S. Villarama*
Address	–	*101 E. Rodriguez Sr. Avenue, Quezon City*
Telephone No.:	–	*(632) 455-2758*
e-mail address	–	*vsvillarama@nfa.gov.ph*
Fax No.	–	*(632) 455-2758*
Website	–	*www.nfa.gov.ph*

(Sgd.) PEDRO S. HERNANDO, JR.
Deputy Administrator and BAC Chair
for Administration and General Support Services

(PDI–August 6 & 13, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE FOR INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court, through its Bids and Awards Committee for Infrastructure Projects, invites interested contractors to submit applications for eligibility and to bid for the project consisting of the following three (3) components:

1. Conversion of the 4th Floor of the Multi-Purpose Building into the new offices of the Office of the Clerk of Court, Third Division, Supreme Court, including interior fit-out;
2. Renovation of an office of an Associate Justice in the Supreme Court Main Building; and
3. Construction of three (3) new public restrooms (two [2] for the physically disabled) and rehabilitation, repair and renovation of eleven (11) existing public restrooms in two (2) Supreme Court buildings

Approved budget for the contract: P6,288,993.79
Completion period: Within forty-five (45) calendar days

The application for eligibility and to bid is open only to bona fide qualified contractors registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) who are at least under Small B categories.

The Eligibility Check/Screening shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be undertaken.

All particulars relative to the eligibility statement and screening, bid security, performance security, pre-bidding conference, evaluation of bids, post-qualification and award of the contract to the lowest calculated responsive bid shall be governed by Republic Act No. 9184 (Government Procurement Reform Act) and its implementing rules and regulations.

Copies of instructions regarding the application for eligibility may be obtained at anytime from July 31 to August 16, 2006 at the Office of the SC-BAC-IP Chairperson, 3rd Floor, SC Old Building, Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila (Tel. nos. 536-9253 and 536-9233).

Activities	Schedule
Submission of letter of intent and application for eligibility	On or before August 21, 2006 (Office of the SC-BAC-IP Chairperson)
Issuance of bid documents to eligible contractors upon payment of P2,000.00	From August 28 to September 1, 2006
Pre-bid conference	September 15, 2006 (10:00 a.m. at the Old Session Hall, 3rd Floor, SC Old Building Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila
Submission of bids	October 2, 2006 (on or before 12:00 noon Office of the SC-BAC-IP Chairperson)
Opening of bids	October 2, 2006 (1:30 p.m.) Old Session Hall, 3rd Floor, SC Old Building

The Supreme Court reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to declare the bidding a failure, to waive any defect or infirmity and to award the contract to the bidder with the most advantageous offer to the government.

(Sgd.) ANTONIO H. DUJUA
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee
for Infrastructure Projects

(PDI-July 30 & Aug 6, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Governor Celestino Gallares Memorial Hospital

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Supply and Delivery of Hospital Supplies (Re-bid)
(Gen. Appropriations Act 2006 & Continuing Appropriation)

1. The GOVERNOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL, through the General Appropriations Act 2006 and Continuing Appropriations intends to apply the sum of ***Php 6,142,528.40*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *Supply and Delivery of Hospital Supplies (Re-bid).* Bids received in excess of the ABC shall automatically be rejected at Bid opening.
2. The GOVERNOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for ***Supply and Delivery of Hospital Supplies (Re-bid).*** Delivery of the GOODS required is *10 calendar days.* The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from GOVERNOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL BAC Chairman, ***Luz R. Rosales*** and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 1:00–5:00 p.m
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address given below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of ***Php 1,000.00 per category.*** The method of payment will be *Cash.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The GOVERNOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 24, 2006 / 2:00 PM at GCGMH Audio Visual Room.***
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the *GCGMH Audio Visual Room on or before 10:00 A.M. on the scheduled opening of bids* per category. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Form of Bid Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract to be Bid
1. Cash	One percent (1%)
2. GSIS Bond	Two and a half percent (2 1/2%)

8. Bid opening shall be on the following schedules listed below at 10:00 A.M. at *GCGMH Audio-Visual Room.* Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

Date	Category
September 11, 2006	Drugs and Medicine Supplies
September 14, 2006	Laboratory Supplies
September 18, 2006	Medical / Surgical Supplies
September 20, 2006	Miscellaneous Supplies
	Housekeeping Supplies
	Dietary Supplies
	Engineering Supplies
September 21, 2006	Dental Supplies
	X-ray Supplies
	Office Supplies
	Medical Oxygen Supplies
	Linen Supplies

9. The GOVERNOR CELESTINO GALLARES MEMORIAL HOSPITAL reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Governor Celestino Gallares Memorial Hospital
Luz R. Rosales, BAC Chairman
Dormitory Manager
Miguel Parras St. Tagbilaran City, Bohol
Tel. No. **(038) 411-4868 / (038) 411-4869 / (038) 501-7531 loc. 242**
Fax No. **(038) 411-3181**
Email address: **gcgmh@globelines.com.ph**

(Sgd.) **LUZ R. ROSALES**
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – August 6 & 12, 2006)

PRISM — PRIVATE SECTOR MOBILIZATION FOR FAMILY PLANNING
USAID — FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Request for Submission of Grant Applications

The Private Sector Mobilization (PRISM) for Family Planning Project is seeking applications for a grant award intended for

Installation and Maintenance of New or Improvement of Existing Workplace Family Planning (WP-FP) Programs RFA 2006-01-04

PRISM is a project funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) under USAID Contract Number 492-C-00-04-00036-00 and implemented by Chemonics International Incorporated.

Grant funding of up to PHP 3.6M will be provided to 15 successful grant applications in accordance with standard USAID policies.

This solicitation is open to Philippine-based and legally registered NGOs as well as private sector for-profit and not-for-profit organizations. Specific eligibility requirements are indicated in the Request for Applications (RFA) document.

The solicitation document will be released on **Monday, 31 July 2006.** Applicants interested in getting the full details of this solicitation can request for copies of the full RFA document from grants@prism.org.ph. Likewise, the RFA can be downloaded in PDF format from http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/PRISMGrants/. The closing date for the submission of application is **5:00pm, 8 September 2006.**

Grant Applicants' Conference will be held at the following PRISM offices: **7 August 2006** 2pm at the PRISM Manila office 23/F Wynsum Corporate Plaza, F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center, Pasig City; **9 August 2006** 2 pm at the PRISM Cebu office Gold Zeal, 2F Cebu Holdings Center, Cebu Business Park, Cardinal Rosales Ave., Cebu City; **11 August 2006** 2pm at the PRISM Davao office 4/F Pryce Tower, Pryce Business Park, J.P. Laurel Ave., Davao City.

For further details, please contact Cristina Avila CAvila@prism.org.ph or Agnes Payson APayson@prism.org.ph.

(PDI–July 30 & Aug. 6, 2006)

PETRON
Needs
SERVICE STATION DEALERS
for

LOCATIONS	Required Cash Capital	Deadline for Submission of Application
1. 122 Mc Arthur Highway, Marulas, Valenzuela City	P4.0M	08/15/06
2. Mc Arthur Highway, Carmen, Pangasinan	P4.0M	08/15/06
3. Maharlika Highway, Concepcion Pequeña, Naga City, Camarines Sur	P4.5M	08/20/06
4. Tanauan, Batangas	P5.0M	08/31/06
5. P. Makro, Aguinaldo Highway, Imus Cavite	P5.0M	09/15/06
6. Molino-Paliparan Road, Molino IV, Bacoor Cavite	P6.0M	09/15/06

Note: Above capital requirement needed for actual station operation; No up-front money is given to Petron.

Only applicants who can meet the following "MUST" requirements need apply:

a. Must be able to put up required capitalization;
b. Must be able to operate and run the station on full time basis;
c. Must not be an existing dealer of any other oil company.

Preference shall be given to applicants residing near the station being applied for. Previous applicants need not apply.

Please secure your application forms from Luzon Reseller, Petron Corporation.

Jesus St., Pandacan, Manila
c/o Ms. Rosette P. Sanchez at tel. 563-8521 Loc. 282

Submit application forms not later than the deadline specified for each location.

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dti — TRADE & INDUSTRY

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) invites all interested parties to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **"Implementation of the One Internet Service Provider (One-ISP) CY 2006 Project"** for the Department of Trade and Industry for a period of one (1) year, with an approved budget of Five million pesos (Php 5,000,000.00).

Bid documents will be available for issuance starting 7 August 2006 until 5 P.M. of 14 August 2006 during office hours at the Supply Section, General Administrative Service, Ground Floor, Trade & Industry Building, 361 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City c/o Mr. Claudio H. Averilla, with telephone number 751-4996, after paying a non-refundable fee of Five thousand pesos (Php 5,000.00). A pre-bid conference will be held on 14 August 2006, 9:30 A.M. at the Center Conference Room, 6th Floor, Trade & Industry Building, 361 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

Deadline for the submission of the eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals, and the opening of bids will be on 28 August 2006, 9:30 A.M. at the Center Conference Room, 6th Floor, Trade & Industry Building, 361 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. The DTI Bids and Awards Committee will not entertain late bidders.

The DTI reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the government. The DTI assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) MARIA LOURDES T. BAUA
Assistant Secretary
Chairperson, DTI Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–August 6 & 13, 2006)

NEECO II
AREA 2

NUEVA ECIJA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. – Area 2
Maharlika Highway, Brgy. Diversion
San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Tel./Fax : 044-486-3668

The Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. – Area 2 (NEECO II–Area 2) now invites Sealed Bids from eligible bidders to bid for assorted scrap (iron/steel), unserviceable electrical equipment / devices, unserviceable automotive parts / devices, unserviceable computer accessories and other scrap materials/equipment with floor price in the amount of **ONE MILLION THREE HUNDRED FIVE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SIXTY TWO AND 50/100 (P1,305,162.50) PESOS.**

Pre-Bid Conference and inspection of scrap materials will be conducted at the NEECO II – Area 2 Main Office at Maharlika Highway, Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija on August 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. Bidding proper will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Non-refundable registration fee is **TWO THOUSAND (P2,000.00) PESOS.**

THE NEECO II–Area 2 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informalities therein and accept any bid or offer which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to NEECO II–Area 2.

(Sgd.) ENGR. CLARENCE M. PAREDES
PBAC Chairman
Cell No. 0917-985-8937

Noted by:
(Sgd.) MR. RAMON M. DE VERA
General Manager

(PDI – August 6 & 7, 2006)

Comfort of a home in Pasig

PASIG CITY'S FAmous Somerset Place will hold an Open House on 26 August 2006. Activities for the event include a mini-exhibit showcasing the house models and floor plans. Sales acceptance shall start at 9:00 AM. Lunch will be served.

The 7.5 hectare project composed of 632 townhouse units actually held its successful ground breaking event on 1 July 2006. More than 200 guests attended and several units were reserved on the said day.

Owner-developer Duraville Realty and Development Corporation (DRDC) boasts of Somerset's strategic location – set just five minutes away from Eastwood City, Libis. It is located right in the middle of Metro Manila's business centers – Makati, Ortigas, Eastwood, Cubao. It will soon be home to families, retirees and yuppies.

The three-bedroom, two-toilet-and-bath, two-storey townhouse units has three house models – Aubrey, Beatrice and Corrine, which you can acquire at easy-on-the-pocket rates and flexible terms of payment. Package includes a car garage, perimeter fence, gate and landscaped pocket garden.

Editha L. Manansala, Executive Vice President of Duraville Marketing, Inc., is inviting interested buyers to attend our Open House. Brokers are also very much welcome. For inquiries and confirmation of attendance, call Duraville Marketing Office at 634-8801 to 03.

JOB COMPACT
Get more exposure for your ad. Advertise in JobMarket Compact.
Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.
Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.
JOB Market

Standard Form Number: SF-GOOD-05
Revised on: July 28, 2004

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF LA UNION
City of San Fernando

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF LA UNION,** through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/ manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder contract:

NAME OF CONTRACT	LOCATION	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (P)	CONTRACT DURATION
BRAND NEW DUMP TRUCK **Specifications:** Forward control; tilt cab; left hand drive 4 x 2; six wheeler 3.8 m³ capacity; powered by Isuzu Diesel Engine Model 6HH 1– N with output of 175PS/2, 800 RPM gross vehicle mass 11,000 kg; dump body max. payload 5,700 kgs. complete with spare tire, standard tool kit, and manuals	Provincial Government of La Union, Provincial Capitol, City of San Fernando, La Union	For use in the Provincial Government of La Union	3,420,000.00	120 days

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last 2 years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

ACTIVITIES	SCHEDULE
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 14, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	August 21, 2006, 9:00 A.M. Diego Silang Hall, Capitol Bldg., SFC
3. Opening of Bids	August 28, 2006, 9:00 A.M. Diego Silang Hall, Capitol Bldg., SFC
4. Bid Evaluation	August 29 – September 12, 2006
5. Post-Qualification	August 29 – September 12, 2006
6. Notice of Award	August 29 – September 12, 2006

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **P3,000** to the **Office of the Provincial Treasurer's** Cashier.

The **PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT OF LA UNION** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) DR. GEOFFREY S. TILAN
BAC Chairman

(PDI – August 6 & 13, 2006)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM invites all interested parties to submit sealed proposals for the sale of One (1) Lot Scrap metals, obsolete computers and printers, unserviceable typewriters & fax machines and other scrap materials located at the GSIS Pasay City on 'AS IS , WHERE IS" basis to be conducted on August 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at the Physical Resources Lounge, Level I, Core B, New GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Pasay City.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MIN. BID
1. One (1) lot	Scrap metal consisting of unserviceable CCTV cameras, telemitter, digital central receivers, racks, printers, consoles, keyboard, batteries, transformers, fuses, printers, monitors, ADT panel boxes, smoke detectors, generator starter, spotlights, roll up doors, steel cabinets, pellets container, exhaust shutter, rolling doors, insulators, incandescent bulbs, ballasts, fluorescent lamps, AHU, condensing units, steel box, UPS switch, rectifier cell, CCTV CPU, window type aircon, disk cartridge, magnetic reel, ADT surveillance controller, metal cabinets, fixtures, cabinets, oil filter, halogen, tracklight, roll up doors and condensing unit, staplers, perforators, electric fans, blinds, dilapidated furnitures and other scrap metals estimated at 20,000 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 213,200.00
2. One (1) lot	Obsolete / unserviceable computer equipment estimated at 2,193 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 23,377.38 or 10.66/kl
3. One (1) lot	Unserviceable 55 typewriters and 33 fax machines estimated at 990 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,900.00 or 10.00/kl
4. 28 Pcs.	Used Tires	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,100.00 or 325.00/pc

The above obsolete/unserviceable equipment and other scrap materials may be inspected at the New GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City during office hours. For official Bid Forms and further inquiries, please refer to the Materials Management Department, GSIS, Financial Center, Pasay City at Tel No. 891-6295.

Sealed Bids shall be accompanied by a refundable cash bid securities equivalent to 10% of the total amount of bid. Manager', cashier's or certified checks shall be accepted as cash.

The GSIS/PRDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defect/s or informality of the bids received, to accept the bid most advantageous to the System and does not guarantee that an award will be made. The decision of the GSIS/PRDC in this regard shall be final and binding.

(SGD) ARNALDO C. CUASAY
Senior Vice-President
Administration Group

(PDI-August 6, 7 & 8, 2006)

BIARSP

INVITATION TO BID

Motorcycles

The Belgian Integrated Agrarian Reform Programme (BIARSP) is a bilateral development programme between the Governments of the Philippines and Belgium. Its aim is to assist the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to successfully complete the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP).

BIARSP is currently on its third and final phase of implementation. BIARSP is regarded as an important programme for agrarian reform. It is highly regarded for its integrated approach covering not only agricultural support services but also education, public health and institutional capacity building.

To further strengthen the programme's implementation, BIARSP supports its lead partner agency, the DAR, in upgrading its transportation complement by providing Motorcycles for selected DAR Regional, Provincial and Municipal Offices of Region 7 & 9.

The BIARSP-Technical Support and Coordination Office (TSCO) therefore invites eligible companies to bid for one hundred thirty-eight (138) units motorcycles (99 units automatic and 39 units manual transmission) in full or in batches. The equipment shall be delivered to the four (4) provinces of Region VII and the four (4) provinces of Region IX.

Interested parties are invited to visit **www.biarsptsco.org** (OPPORTUNITIES – Tenders) for the specifications as well as delivery destinations for the said equipment. Please submit proposed technical document with information such as company profile, proposed budgetary requirements, through any of the following:

E-mail : **tsco@biarsptsco.org**
Post : BIARSP – TSCO, 2nd Floor Sol Y Mar Bldg., Cor. Rizal Blvd. – San Juan Street, Dumaguete City, Negros Oriental
Fax : (035) 422-7736

For further queries, please get in touch with Mary Marlyn C. Llosa, Administrative Officer, at telephone #s: (035) 225-5929; 225-5930; 225-8681; and 422-7459.

Interested parties are advised to submit their documents not later than September 4, 2006.

(PDI–August 2 & 6, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

REQUEST FOR EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

CONSULTANCY SERVICES ON THE "UPDATING OF THE MISSIONARY ELECTRIFICATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2006-2010" AND INTEGRATION OF RENEWAL ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
RURAL POWER PROJECT
CONSULTING SERVICES
GEF Grant No. TF052188

The Government of the Philippines, through the Department of Energy (DOE) and with grant assistance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), is implementing the Rural Power Project, Grant No. TF052188-PH.

The Republic Act No. 9136 otherwise known as the **"Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001"** or **"EPIRA"** has mandated DOE to formulate and implement the Missionary Electrification Development Plan (MEDP) which aims to define the strategies and activities of the Government in ensuring the provision of electricity in areas not connected to main transmission systems. As a rolling plan, the DOE is mandated under the EPIRA to update the MEDP on an annual basis.

The RPP seeks to engage a Consulting Firm to undertake the **Consultancy Services on the Preparation of the Missionary Electrification Development Plan 2006-2010 and Integration of Renewable Energy Technologies** with the primary purpose of updating 2005-2009 MEDP into the 2006-2010 MEDP. Said activity shall involve the conduct of planning assessments, investment analyses, policy analysis, and promotional activities related to the missionary generation and the off-grid, remote area electrification by qualified third parties, among others. It also involves the provision of assistance in the review of the MEDP the Energy Regulatory Commission. The Consulting Firm and its Team of Experts shall be responsible to interact and collaborate with other Consultants implementing related activities under the Project through the supervision of DOE.

The DOE invites eligible Consulting Firms to indicate their interest in providing the services. Interested Consultants must provide information indicating that they are qualified to perform the services with the following documents: (1) company profile; (2) curriculum vitae (CV) of proposed Team of Experts; and (3) track record broken down into domestic and international contracts a well as on-going and completed projects, including description of similar assignments and work experience, if any.

The Consultant will be selected in accordance with the procedures set out in the World Bank's **Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants by World Bank Borrowers** published in January 1997 (revised in September 1977, January 1999 and May 2002). Interested Parties may obtain further information from the contact person and address below during office hours 0800 to 1700 hours.

Mylene C. Capongcol
Project Director, Rural Power Project
Electric Power Industry Management Bureau
Department of Energy
Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Numbers 840-2120 or 8401401 local 132
Fax Number: 8402120 or 8405593
Email Address: mycaps@doe.gov.ph

The Expression of Interest must be delivered to the address below on or before **August 21, 2006** (up to 5:00 p.m.):

Melinda L. Ocampo
Undersecretary
Department of Energy
Energy Center, Fort Bonifacio Taguig, Metro Manila

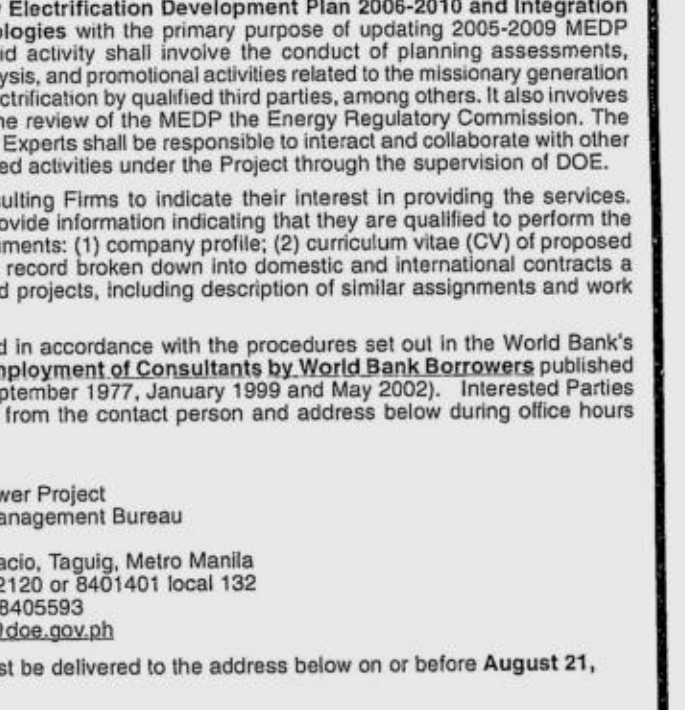
(PDI--Aug. 6, 2006)

DOH chief to keynote PCCP's & PhilCAT's joint confab

HEALTH SECRETARY Francisco Duque will be the keynote speaker during the joint 11th midyear convention of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians (PCCP) and the 13th annual convention of the Philippine Coalition Against Tuberculosis on August 17-19 at the Taal Vista Lodge, Tagaytay City.

With this year's theme focusing on the four common chest diseases encountered by Filipinos - "Continuing United Action Against Pinoy Big Burden: Tuberculosis, Pneumonia, COPD and Asthma," the event organizers' scientific committee has lined up a distinguished roster of speakers for the three plenary sessions (PS), eight convention symposia (CS) and one breakfast symposia (BS) during the two-day convention proper. They are Ed Chua – PS1: The Role of Business in Health Promotion and Disease Control; Dr. Teresita S. de Guia – PS2: Standards in Asthma Care; Dr. Toru Mori – PS3: The Role of Preventive Measures in TB Control; Dr. Salvacion Gatchalian – CS1: Clinical Practice Guidelines in Childhood TB; Dr. Manolito Chua - CS2 : Guidelines for Hospital-Acquired Pneumonia; Drs. P Danilo J. Lagamayo and Oscar Ferdinand Feliciano – CS3: Radiologic Pearls: TB or not TB; Dr. Jennifer Ann R. Mendoza-Wi – CS4: Updates in Chronic Cough; Dr. Lenora C. Fernandez – CS5: Addressing Challenges in COPD Management; Dr. Charles Y. Yu – CS6: PPMD – New Directions in Private Sector Involvement; Dr. Dina V. Diaz – CS7: Problems in Pre-employment Clearance; Dr. Thelma Tupasi – CS8: MDRTB/DOTS Plus – Future Directions and Challenges; and Dr. Victoria Dalay – BS1: A Synchrony of TB Control Initiatives.

Pre-convention postgraduate courses for this year include Basics of Chest CT Scan Reading and Basic DOTS Training for Referring Physicians. For inquiries, please contact the PCCP Secretariat, Tel. nos. 924-9204, Telefax no. 924-0144, e-mail: pccp@zpdee.net.



OFW IN MILAN WINS PAG-IBIG HOUSING BOND RAFFLE DRAW

Ms. Marietta Revilla, a Filipino overseas worker in Milan, Italy, accepts her Certificate of Award from Consul General Pedro Chan of the Philippine Consulate in Milan. Ms. Revilla is one of the winners of a house and lot worth Php 650,000.00 in the Pag-IBIG Housing bond raffle draw held at the Pag-IBIG Fund Corporate Headquarters on June 9, 2006. Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds (Series 2001-1) was issued by the Pag-IBIG Fund to augment funds for its housing loan program. It has term of 5 years and 1 day. The bonds were available in denominations of P5,000, P10,000, P50,000, P100,000, P500,000 and P1million with a yield of 8% per annum tax free. Eligible bondholders were entitled to participate in a semi-annual/special raffle draw of house and lot packages. The Pag-IBIG Housing Bonds (Series 2001-1) are set to mature on November 28 this year.

3RD BATCH OF PERSONAL AWARENESS AND LEADERSHIP SEMINAR IN CEBU

PowerSpeak held its second batch of Personal Awareness and Leadership seminar (PALs) in Cebu last July at the Cebu Grand Hotel. The graduates attest that the three-day seminar was highly experiential and insightful, providing them with an enlightening fresh perspective towards life. PALs is based on the fundamental principle that each individual possesses unlimited, untapped potential and unlocking these allows a person to achieve greater results and abundance. Shown in photo are the graduates of PALs with the facilitator Joey P. Reyes. PALs Cebu batch 4 is slated on Aug. 11, 12 and 13 at the Cebu Grand Hotel while Davao and Manila will be on Aug. 18, 19 and 20. Interested parties in Manila and Davao may inquire at (02) 8405958 and (02) 840-5960, or text 0917-5555639 and in Cebu (032) 2722700 or 0917-3252952. You may also email them at powerspeak@gmail.com or log on to www.powerspeakph.com.

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT ESTATE OF DANILO CAMPOS SR. HAS BEEN EXTRA JUDICIALLY SETTLED PER DOC. NOTARIZED BEFORE ATTY. MICHAEL VITO CRUZ ENTERED AS DOC. 58, PAGE 13, BOOK II, SERIES OF 2005. (AUG. 6,13&20, 2006)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE ANGELINA JIZ DE ORTEGA HAS BEEN EXTRAJUCIALLY SETTLED AMONG HER HEIRS AS PER DOC. NO. 415 PAGE NO. 84 BOOK XI SERIES OF 2005 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC ATTY. BENEDICTA BARRIENTOS. DOC. NO. 488 PAGE 98 BOOK XXII SERIES 2005 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC DOMINIC FELISARIA. DOC. # 6941 PAGE 232 SERIES OF 2005 BEFORE CONSUL PATRIC JOHN HILADO, PHIL CONSULATE, CHICAGO, ILL. U S A (AUG. 6,13&20, 2006

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AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP BR of 2230 M. Roxas St. Sta Ana Manila Auction Sale on Aug. 14, 2006, Mon. at 2:30 in the afternoon. Respectively, Mar. 13 - Apr. 12, 2006 SONS of J LANUZA, Auctioneer (PDI August 06, 2006)

NUEVA ECIJA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. – Area 2
Maharlika Highway, Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Tel. / Fax : 044-486-3668

NEECO II
Area 2

August 2, 2006

The Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. – Area 2 is inviting you to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of labor and materials for the following:

LOCATION	XFORMER	1PHASE	OS (KM)	UB (KM)
1. Las Piñas, Penaranda	1-15kVA	0.558	0.305	0.258
2. Bagong Sibol, Mambangnan, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.382	0.392	0.302
3. San Anton, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.040	0.390	-------
4. Castellano, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.210	0.320	0.180
5. Bilarang Hipon, Gulod, Gen. Tinio	1-15kVA	-------	0.280	-------
6. Ofelia Subd. Padolina, Gen. Tinio	1-15kVA	0.210	0.140	-------
7. Tumana 1, Magpapalayok, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.490	0.135	0.120
8. Sitio Tibag, Mambangnan, San Leonardo	1-10kVA	-------	0.400	-------

Deadline for the submission of company profile will be simultaneous with the Pre-Bid Conference on August 15, 2006 at exactly 10:00 AM at the Conference Room of NEECO II Area 2. Bidding proper will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Non-refundable Registration Fee is P 1,000.00.

NEECO II Area 2 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive defects or informality therein or accept any bid or offer which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to NEECO II Area 2.

(Sgd.) ENGR. CLARENCE M. PAREDES
PBAC Chairman
Cell No. 0917 985 8937

Noted by:
(Sgd.) MR. RAMON M. DE VERA
General Manager

(PDI-- Aug. 6 & 7, 2006)

PUBLIC NOTICES

Notice to the Public
Please be informed that Kasanga Construction of Bayanan 1, Calapan City has changed its business name to KASANGA CONSTRUCTION AND SUPPLIES to simplify its government transactions. Notice is in conformance with PCAB requirements.
(PDI – August 5, 2006)

AUCTION SALE

MARA PAWNSHOP
I, II, III, IV and Comembo Br. of Makati City AUCTION SALE on AUG. 14, 2006 Mon., at 10:30, 11:00, 12:30, and 1:30 and 8:30 in the morning and on the afternoon, Respectively MAR. 13 - APR. 12, 2006.
Sons of J. Lanuza, Auctioneer (PDI August 06, 2006)

LEGAL NOTICE

Extra-judicial Settlement Notice is Hereby given that the estate of the late MANUEL V. ANDRADE JR. who died Intestate on September 15, 2002 Left a Certain Parcels of Lands covered.By TCT Nos 17417:7801:50911 Has been extra-judicially setteled among heirs Per Doc No. 295:Page No. 60 Book No. IV Series of 2006 Executed Before Notary Public Atty LETICIA S. MARIANO DE GUIA OF Paranaque City. (PDI July 30,Aug. 6&13,2006)

Notice is Hereby given That the estate of the late RODRIGO I. CRUZ,SR. and LETICIA A. CRUZ has been extrajudicially settled among their heirs before Notary Public EUTROPIO A. MIGRIÑO as Per Doc.133,Page no 28 Book No. II Series of 2006 (PDI Aug 6,13 &20,2006)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN OF THE EXTRAJUDICIAL SETTLEMENT OF THE INTESTATE ESTATE OF ROMULO A. BERNABE BY HIS LEGAL HEIRS PER DOC. 204: PAGE 42: BOOK NO.25; SERIES OF 2006 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC JESUS B. BONGON PDI-July 23, 30 & Aug. 6, 2006

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ALBERT BALAIS DINGCOL was Extra-judially Settled By the heirs as Per Doc# 055 Page#13 Book#91 Series of 2006 By Notary Public Atty. DANILO B. BAÑARES of Makati City. (PDI Aug.06,13&20'06)

Notice is Hereby Given that the Estate of the late PETRONILO A. RIVERA was Extrajudicially settled among His Heirs as per Doc no.93 Page no. 20 Book no. 66 Series of 2006 Notary Public Atty. LOPE M. VELASCO of Manila (PDI-Aug 6,13,20'06)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late LEONARDO S. CRUZ has been extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc#179 Page#36 Book#480 Series of 2005 by Notary Public Atty. Lucila M. Lawas Yutoc of Pasig City. (PDI - July 30 & Aug 6 & 13, 2006)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that stock Cert. No. 5219 issued by Equitable Banking Corp. to MARCELO DEE covering 45,000 shares has been lost. If no contest is received new certificate will be issued. (PDI-Aug. 6, 13, 20, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that PETRON CORP. stock Certificate No. 00417899 for 500 shares issued to Carolyn Villanueva Sy was reported lost. If no contest received. A new certificate will be issued. (PDI-July 30, Aug. 6, 13, 2006)

PERSONAL

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BATCH '90 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Rizal High School Batch 1990 will hold its 2ND General & Induction of officers on Sept. 2, 2006, 5:30 p.m at RHS Alumni Hall. Call 0915-9370383 Irene Hintoloro for details.

Arellano Law Foundation
mourns the death of

Judge Normando T. Garcia
(November 24, 1945 - August 3, 2006)

Presiding Judge, Branch 46,
Metropolitan Trial Court, Pasay City
Member, Board of Trustees, Arellano Law Foundation
Professor, Arellano University School of Law

His colleagues at the Arellano Law Foundation join his family in requesting the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Chapel C, Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Tuesday, August 8, 2006, at 11:30 a.m.

In Loving Memory of

NORA DE GUIA vda. de BALBIN

who peacefully joined our Creator on the 27th of July 2006 year of the Lord
at the age of Sixty One
in Sherman Oaks, California, USA

She will be truly missed by her children: **Chell** and **Robert Navarro, Lala** and **Bennett Blancaflor, Bunny** and **Johnny Lu, Leo, Bopeep** and **Miko**; grandchildren: **Mitch** and **Josh Navarro, Gelo Blancaflor, Chino** and **Tomi Lu** and **Anton Cuasay**; and brothers and sisters: **Oscar** and **Yollie, Ida** and **Jeff, Socorro** and **Gerry, Bob** and **Mylene** and **Nick** and **Marist**; nephews and nieces.

Let us all pray that her soul may rest in eternal peace with the Lord.

Her remains will lie in state at Funeraria Paz, Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque, Metro Manila.

Interment will be on Thursday, August 10 after the 8:30 Mass, also at the Manila Memorial Park.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

Dr. Ernesto M. Almeda

who died on July 19, 2006

wish to express our deepest appreciation to all of you, our friends near and far, who sent flowers, mass cards, letters of sympathy, spent precious time with us, and expressed in many other ways your love, concern and support during our time of greatest sorrow.

ANGELINA PERALTA CRUZ

widow of **Atty. ALFREDO P. CRUZ**

of 44 Dr. Alejos St., Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City

Peacefully joined our Lord and Creator on August 4, 2006 at the age of 84.

Her loving children **FREDDIE & MARISA, JOHNNY & NANCY**; grandchildren **FREDERIC, KRYSTLE, MICKY, NICO, JOHN-JOHN, MICHELLE, ALJOHN, BJ**; other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Sto. Domingo Church and will be transferred to Arlington tonight, August 6, 2006, 6 p.m. at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be announced later.

"I have put a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord will award to me that day... and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for His appearing." **2 Timothy 4:7-8**

With deep sorrow, we wish to announce that
Our dearest Mommy

LIRIO "LILY" BAUTISTA VICTORINO

1929-2006

entered in Glory with her Lord and Savior on August 5, 2006 at the age of 76.

Left to mourn her loss but eternally grateful to God for a well lived life are her husband **Justice Raoul** and daughter **Lillie**; her brothers (sisters-in-law) sisters (brothers-in-law) **Chito** and **Mel Bautista, Lenny Buzon Bautista, Chita** and **Celo Pagkalinawan, Mac** and **Susan Bautista**; her cousins, nieces, nephews and grandchildren.

We wish to inform relatives and friends that her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Edsa corner Bernardino St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City.

Her remains will be transferred to Bishop Moises F. Buzon Memorial Church, Unida Ecumenical Church, 634 Moriones St., Tondo, Manila in the afternoon of August 8, 2006.

Interment will be on August 9, 2006 at the Manila North Cemetery after the 1:00 p.m. Memorial and Commital Service at the Bishop Moises F. Buzon Memorial Church.

"I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die." **John 11:25-26**

Gloria Rodis Aseniero

of Cebu City

Died peacefully in the Grace of our Lord on the 5th of August 2006 at the age of 96.

Her beloved husband **Engr. Antonio Sr.** (†) and children **Bertina** (†) & **Florian Colmenares** (†), **Antonio Jr. "Boy"** & **Luz, Mercedes** & **Dr. Florentino Solon, Leticia** (†), **Purita** & **James Young, Mary Anne** & **Perfecto Arrabaca**, grandchildren and great grandchildren request the faithful to join us in prayer.

Her remains lie in state at the Cosmopolitan Funeral Parlor, Nivel Hills, Cebu City.

Interment will be announced later.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

John 14:6

NESTOR P. ESCANO

Died in the Grace of our Lord on August 03, 2006 at the age of 62.

His children **Jo Ann, Jigger, Lovely, Daryl, Brenda, Joey, Abigail** and **Mikey**; mother, brothers, sisters and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at the Del Pilar Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, August 06, 2006 at 6:00 p.m. at Manila Memorial Park Crematory - Mass at 4:00 p.m.

CLASSIFIEDS

NFA readies rice for relief operations

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY administrator Gregorio Y. Tan, Jr., has instructed all the regional and provincial officials of the agency to activate their respective operations centers for the relief operations especially in typhoon affected areas.

The operations centers will be open on a 24-hour basis to closely monitor the typhoon situation and gauge the extent of damage in the affected areas.

NFA officials from Regions I and III reported that they are closely coordinating with the government relief agencies and local government units for the needed relief assistance. All the agency's warehouses in these regions are also ready to issue rice for relief operations, they said.

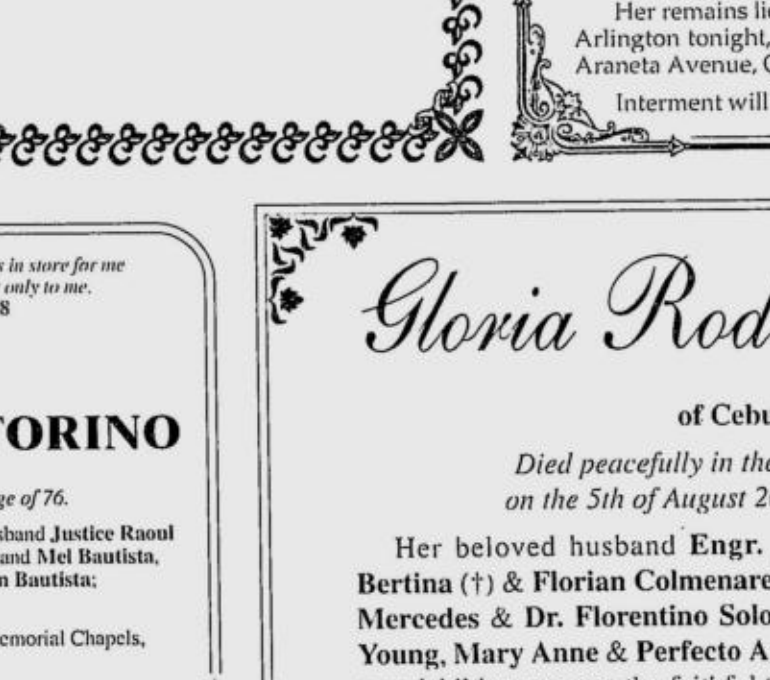
Both regions have also dispatched market monitoring teams to monitor rice supply and prices. Tan cited that to further assure supply stability especially in Region I, the agency's accredited retailers in the far flung municipalities and the Bigasan ni Gloria sa Palengke (BGP) outlets were allowed to increase their inventories.

The BGPs, Tindahan Natin outlets and rolling stores exclusively sell NFA rice at P18 per kg.

With the prevailing inclement weather, unloading operations of imported rice in Subic Port were temporarily suspended. In the meantime, rice stocks in storage depots are being loaded into trucks for immediate transport as soon as the weather permits.

Tan said that the NFA has sufficient rice stocks in areas that are prone to isolation by typhoons like the Cordilleras, Mountain Province, and the island provinces in Southern Tagalog, the Bicol Region and the Visayas.

For more information on rice relief assistance of NFA, the public may send their inquiries via the Text NFA Program with mobile number 0917-6210927.



PALSCON (Philippine Association of Local Service Contractors) attends forum on the illegality of the operation of manpower cooperatives at the Officer's Club of Clark Airbase, Angeles City, Pampanga last July 28. Seated from left, Lawyer Giovanni H. Melgar, President of PALSCON; Atty. Rebecca Chato, Asst. Regional Director, DOLE-NCR, both lawyers are resource speakers of the said forum.

Free linkages between OFWs in Lebanon, Israel and their families

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT thanked the country's leading telecommunications companies for joining its efforts to assist and provide effective communications linkages between the overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) affected by the crisis in Lebanon and their families back home.

Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion, in particular, thanked Globe, Smart, and Globe subsidiary Innove (formerly Islacom) for reinforcing the government's effort to provide free telephone access, and enable families at home to get in touch with their OFW loved ones in Lebanon and Israel.

"Your expression of support has truly magnified the strong government and private sector partnerships especially in times of crisis... we hope that this partnership will endeavor us to pursue other worthy undertakings in the near future," Brion said.

The Labor Chief expressed the government's thanks in three separate letters addressed to Globe Telecom president and chief executive officer Gerardo C. Ablaza, Jr., Smart Communications president Napoleon L. Nazareno, and Innove CEO Gil B. Genio.

Brion, as part of the government's calibrated responses to the Lebanon crisis, had earlier directed the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) to expeditiously put in place the necessary long-distance telephone facilities at the OWWA Center as well as in its regional units nationwide.

In response to Brion's thrust, the said telecom firms voluntarily activated the provision of onsite cellular phone facilities which OFW families are now using for free to contact their loved ones in Lebanon at the OWWA Center in Pasay City.

Brion further cited Globe for its plan to commit its vast nationwide and global telecom capabilities as a weapon in the continuing battle of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) through the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration to eliminate the menace of illegal recruitment victimizing unsuspecting would-be OFWs.

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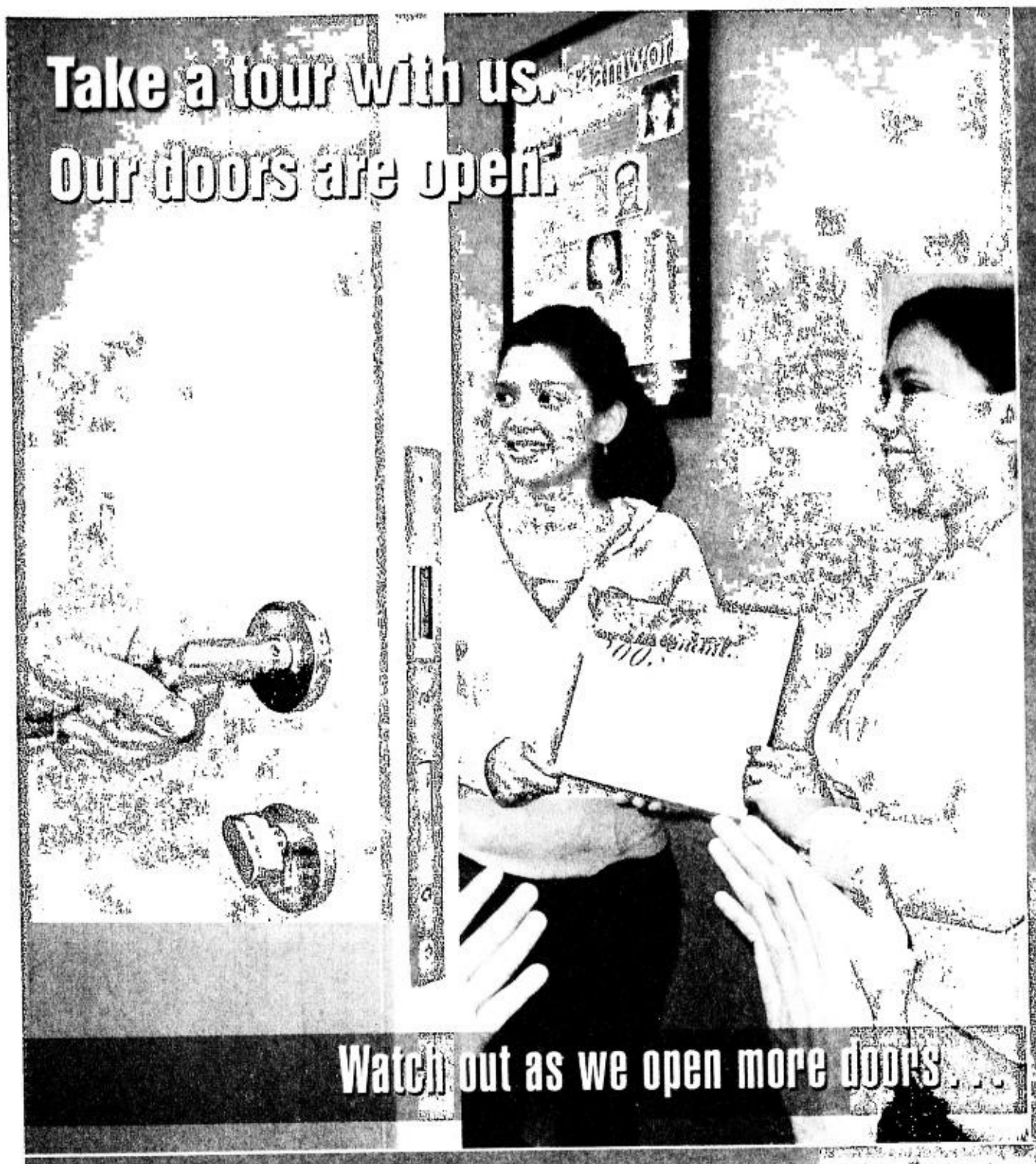

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Apply at our Makati site from August 7-11, 2006 for a chance to win Electronic Availment gift certificates during job offer!

Apply at our U-Belt site from August 7-13, 2006 for a chance to win gift certificates during job offer!

All applicants processed in our Alabang Site from August 7-11, 2006 will each be entitled to a free meal!

Free food will be served to walk-in applicants at our Commonwealth site on August 7, 2006.

Commonwealth Office
2/F Diliman Commercial Center, #46 Don Mariano Marcos Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
(02)756-7088

Makati Office
Convergys One, 6796 Ayala Ave., cor Salcedo St. Legaspi Village, Makati City
(02)756-7188

Ortigas Office
24th Floor, Robinsons Equitable Tower, #4 ADB Avenue Ortigas Center, Pasig City
(02)857-7678

Alabang Office
Block 44, Northgate Cyberzone, Muntinlupa City
(02)758-1688

U-Belt Office
Level 1, St[illegible]
1150 Espana [illegible]
cor. Padre [illegible]
Sampaloc
(02)735-20[illegible]

[illegible] Office
[illegible]
Acacia [illegible]
[illegible] City
(02) [illegible]

For U-Belt applicants, we accept walk-ins Mondays to Sundays, 10am to 7pm.

We offer attractive compensation and benefits packages. Additional rewards and incentives are [illegible] Applicants with resume, NBI Clearance, TIN and SSS number will be prioritized.

For information on how to apply, text CVG HELP to 2308 Globe/Touch Mobile or to 2961 Smart/AMP/Talk [illegible]

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HRD (S) PTE., LTD.

The company is engaged into producing of computer-aided architectural and structural design including continuous research and development.

WE ARE IN NEED OF THE FF:

COMPANY NURSE
- Female/Single
- 25 to 30 years of age and w/ pleasing personality
- BS NURSING Graduate (Licensed)
- Preferably with one (1) year related experience

OFFICE STAFF
- Male/Female not more than 26 years old
- Graduate of any 3 year / 4 year / 5 year course
- Computer Literate
- Knowledge in AutoCAD is a plus

MAINTENANCE STAFF
- **Electrician**
- **AC Technician**
- **Forklift Operator**
- **Batching Plant Operator**
- **Machine Installer**
- **Welder**
- **Boiler Operator / Technician**
- **Material Controller**
- **Loader Operator**
- **Rigger**
- **Plumber**
- **Reverse Osmosis Operator (R/O)**
- **Telephone Technician**

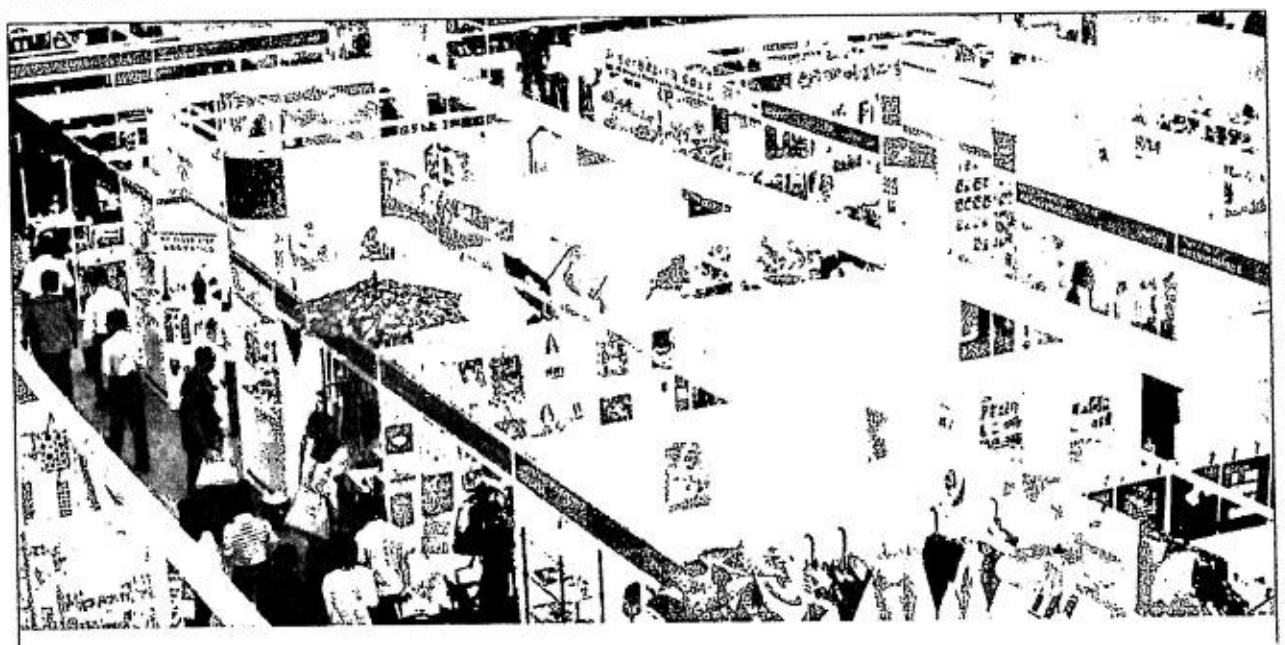
Qualifications:
- Male not more than 32 years old
- Graduate of any related vocational course / College Level
- With minimum of six (6) months related experience

POWERPLANT STAFF
- Male not more than 35 years old
- Graduate of Mechanical / Electrical Engineering or Basic Seaman Course
- With or without license
- Must have a basic computer knowledge
- Willing to work long hours and night shift schedule

Experience in a day-to-day operation & maintenance of a power generator plant (checking of diesel engines, power generators and control panels) is an advantage.

Interested applicants must bring bio-data / resume with 2x2 picture, diploma, Transcript of records and SSS Employment History at:

HRD (S) PTE., LTD.
LOT 7, BLOCK 9, PHASE 1, PEZA, ROSARIO, CAVITE
Tel. No (046) 437-1188 loc. 122
Look for Ms. Jessica L. Sore
E-mail: **personnel02@hrd-s.com**



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As a member of our team, you will enjoy

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To join our multi-cultural team, you will

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→ Have a **business-related Bachelor's degree.**
→ Build on your 3 or more years' sales or marketing expertise.
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Customer Service Representatives

- Preferably graduate of any four-year course
- With excellent communication skills in English
- Must have strong comprehension and listening skills

Leadership Opportunities

- Site Leaders
- Language/Product Trainers/Lead
- Workforce Planning Specialists/Lead
- Quality Assurance Specialists/Lead
- Site Administrative Assistants/Lead
- HR Assistants/Lead
- Payroll Specialists/Lead
- Other Non-CSR positions available

For interested applicants, please also visit our Customer Management Centers at the following locations:

LIPA CITY
Level 1 Expansion Building,
Robinsons Place-Lipa City, Batangas

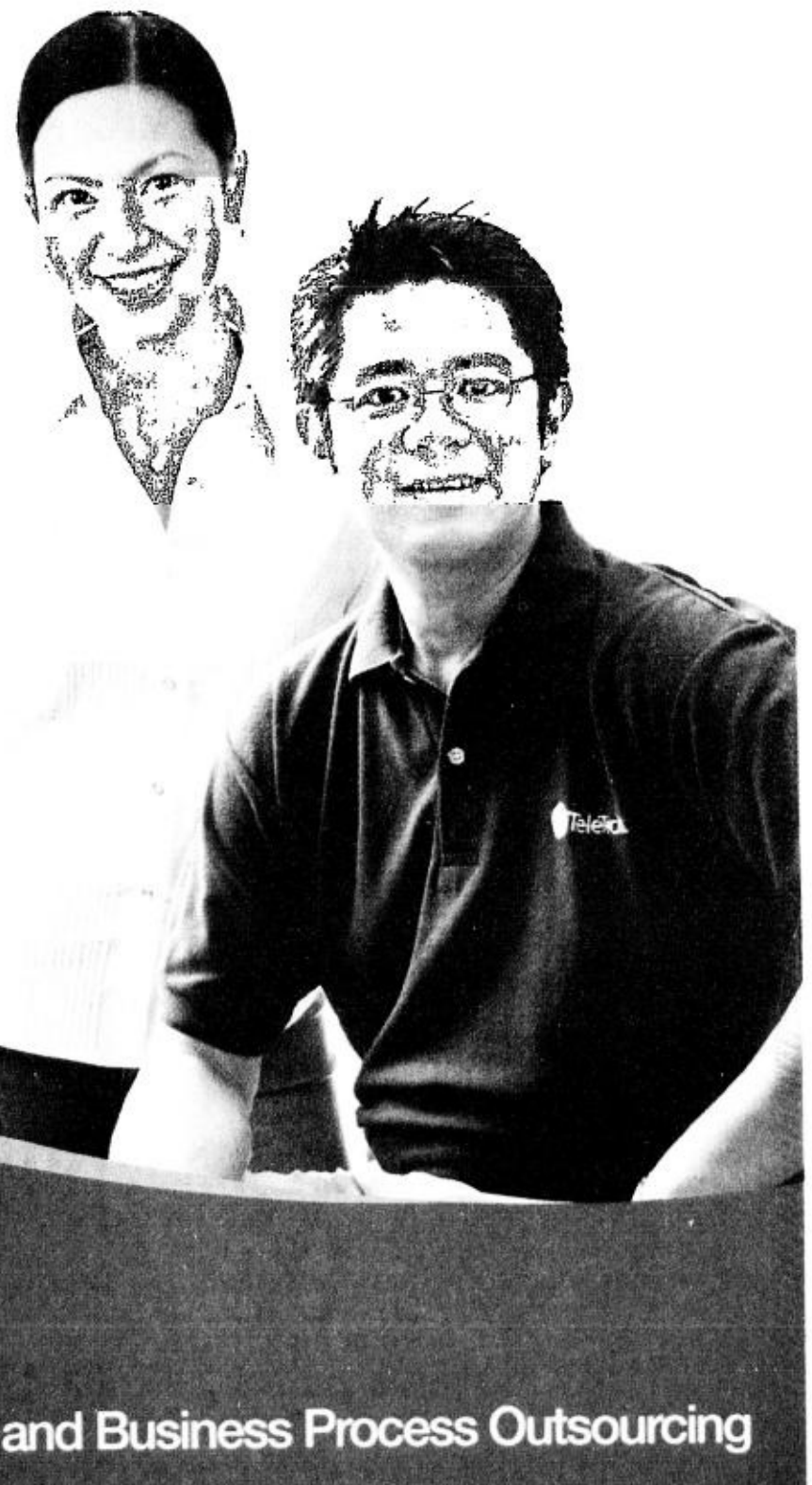
BACOLOD CITY
Level 1, Robinsons Place-Singcang,
Bacolod, Negros Occidental

DUMAGUETE CITY
UMEE Building, Sta Catalina St,
Dumaguete City

Application Steps

1. Call 1-800-10-TELETEC (Toll Free for PLDT and SMART) or 02-552-9799 (NDD charges will apply) to take the TeleTech Language Assessment.
2. Write down your TeleTech Language Assessment identification number.
3. Apply online at

www.HirePoint.com



TeleTech®

TeleTech is the leading provider of Customer Management and Business Process Outsourcing solutions worldwide. Headquartered in Denver, Colorado with a global network in 16 countries, TeleTech supports 40,000 employees in 80 Customer Management Centers (CMCs) located in North America, Europe, Asia-Pacific and Latin America. TeleTech has supported the world's largest companies in our five large CMCs in the Philippines since 2001

Going the extra mile
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At Dell, we set the high bar and keep raising it, so we have to continually redefine ourselves in terms of performance and providing customer experience. This is the best kept secret of how we drive for results in everything that we do. Ask any Dell employee and you'll hear it firsthand. Join us in surpassing the expectations of our customers.

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Be part of Dell as we set up our Customer Care support team. We would like to invite service-oriented individuals to join us for the following positions:

CUSTOMER CARE ASSISTANTS

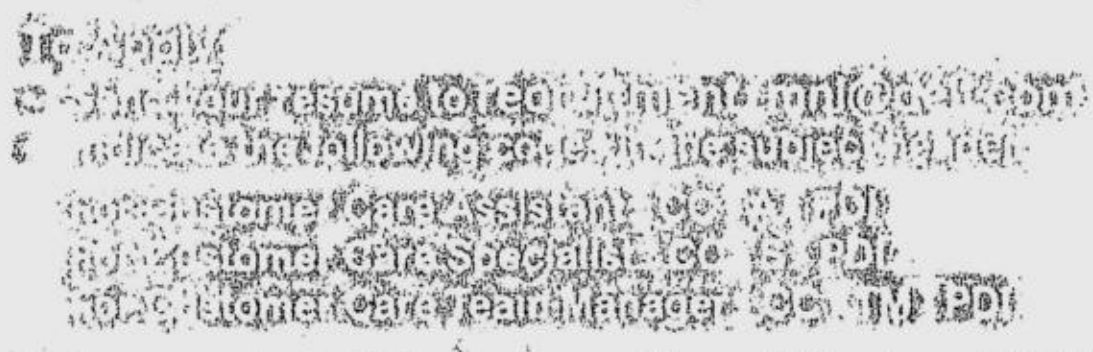
- Provide sales support for Dell's corporate clients through customer service activities
- Minimum of 1 year related experience in voice customer support
- Working knowledge of computer and software applications

CUSTOMER CARE SPECIALISTS

- Level 2 customer service
- Provide direct advice and guidance on escalated customer issues
- Minimum of 3 years total work experience in customer service, with at least 1 year experience in handling escalated calls
- Has handled advanced customer service role

CUSTOMER CARE TEAM MANAGERS

- Manage and develop a team of Customer Care Assistants and Specialists
- Minimum of 2 years supervisory experience in a call center
- Excellent people management skills



You may also visit our Recruitment Center at 27/F, Tower 2, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue cor. Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City

Visit our center at the newly opened SM Mall of Asia at 2/F North Parking Building, SM Mall of Asia Complex, Pasay City, Metro Manila, 1300 Philippines

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A progressive corporation is in need of a

HIGH LEVEL EXECUTIVE IN HUMAN RESOURCE

POSITION DESCRIPTION

The position has the ultimate responsibility for the overall direction and supervision of the institution's Human Resource functions.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, setting the strategic direction for HR in alignment with the institution's corporate goals; directing and supervising the implementation of HR plans and programs; providing highly technical / advisory assistance to Management/Board on HR matters.

PERSONAL TRAITS

This person must have initiative, be self-motivated and results-driven.
He / She is committed to excellence, maintains high personal and professional standards and has the ability to engender an attitude of customer service.

REQUIREMENTS

Master's degree (preferably in Management / Business Administration / Human Resource Management) or Bachelor of Laws

Experience in organizational / HR transformation is an advantage

COMPENSATION

Competitive

Please submit your application with bio-data and transcript of records to:

P.O. BOX NO. 2502 MANILA CENTRAL POSTAL OFFICE
MANILA, PHILIPPINES 1099

A progressive corporation is in need of a

HIGH LEVEL EXECUTIVE

POSITION DESCRIPTION

This position has the ultimate responsibility for the overall direction and supervision of manufacturing plants.

Specific responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the implementation and execution of plans, programs, functions and operating and control standards, upholding and maintaining cost efficiency and competitiveness of products and assuring strict compliance with all regulatory issuances; providing highly technical / advisory assistance to Management / Board.

PERSONAL TRAITS

This person must be self-motivated. He/She must have initiative, solid decision-making capability and project and risk management skills. He/She must be comfortable working in a high security and high accountability environment.

REQUIREMENTS

Engineer (Mechanical or Industrial) with Master's degree (preferably in Management / Business Administration / Engineering)

Quality-Improved Organization experience is an advantage.

COMPENSATION

Competitive

Please submit your application with bio-data and transcript of records to:

P.O. BOX NO. 2502 MANILA CENTRAL POSTAL OFFICE
MANILA, PHILIPPINES 1099

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

SIX (6) MEDICAL TECHNOLOGISTS, FOUR (4) RADIOLOGIC TECHNOLOGISTS, FEMALE NURSES & MIDWIFE

- Licensed, preferably with experience
- Not more than 30 years old
- Superb customer care skills
- Computer literacy is a must

FIVE (5) SALES & MARKETING AGENTS

- Ancillary medical course graduate, preferably
- Not more than 30 years old
- At least two years experience in sales
- Computer Literate
- Excellent English Proficiency

Submit resumé to or via e-mail:
THE OPERATIONS MANAGER
Lakambini Diagnostic Center
1991 Wardley Bldg., Taft Avenue, Pasay City
lakambini_diagnostic@yahoo.com
Tel. 4004643 / 4006266 / 0917-8666233

Education

McGraw-Hill Education (Asia), the global leader in professional publishing for business, government, industry and medical markets invites suitable candidates for the following position:

MARKETING EXECUTIVE

The above position will report to the General Manager. The successful candidate will be responsible for the marketing and promotion of higher education, school and medical titles.

REQUIREMENTS:

- Business or Business-related graduates with minimum 2 years sales/marketing experience
- Fluent in English with good oral and written skills
- Proficient in MS Office
- Has initiative and able to work under minimum supervision
- Aggressive and able to work under pressure
- Highly motivated, self starter and a team player
- Ability and flexibility required to work hours to suit operational requirements
- With valid driver's license

BENEFITS:

We offer an attractive remuneration and benefits package including training, overseas conference trips and opportunities to grow with the company.

All applicants will be treated in strictest confidence. Only shortlisted applicants will be notified. Please submit your resumè with recent 2 x 2 colored photo along with your salary history and expectation before August 15, 2006 to:

The General Manager
McGraw-Hill IEI (Phils.)
Unit 1503 Jollibee Plaza Condominium
Emerald Avenue corner Ruby Street
Ortigas Center, Pasig City 1600
E-mail: mghphils@mcgraw-hill.com.ph
Website: www.mcgraw-hill.com

Please do not hand-carry your application.
Walk-in applicants will not be entertained.

CCF PHILIPPINES
An International NGO Working for the Well-Being of Children

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

Christian Children's Fund (CCF) is an international non-profit, non-political and non-sectarian child development agency that operates in over 30 countries. It has been working in the Philippines for over thirty years implementing programs in the areas of basic education, health and nutrition, water and sanitation, micro-enterprise development and emergency programs. In partnership with 36 community-based organizations all over the Philippines, CCF Philippines assists more than 216,000 children and their families.

It is currently seeking a development professional to take on the role of

GRANT ACCOUNTANT

The overall responsibility will be setting up, maintaining general accounting systems, procedures and controls and ensuring the reliability and timeliness of accounting records, financial statements, donor requirements and reports on Grants.

The successful candidates must have the following qualifications:

- University degree in Bachelor of Science in Accountancy
- At least two years experience as a development professional
- Excellent oral and written communication skills
- Demonstrates a high level of interpersonal and cross-cultural skills
- Can work with minimal supervision and perform effectively under pressure
- A good grasp of children's issues at national and global levels a distinct advantage
- Willing to travel to project areas

Interested applicants may send their application letter addressing the position criteria outlined here together with a detailed Curriculum Vitae with 3 references and contact details to **ccfno@ccfphilippines.org.ph** not later than August 10, 2006. Applications can also be posted to CCF Philippines, 8th Floor, Strata 100 Building, Emerald Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City. Due to the volume of applications we receive, we shall contact short listed applicants only.

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We are looking for

CLIENT DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES

- Graduate of any business course from a reputable university
- Excellent oral & written English communication skills
- At least 2 years of work experience
- Customer-oriented, optimistic, persistent, quick-learner and dependable
- Proactive, self-motivated but at the same time, a team player

Send your résumé to
CENTER FOR LEADERSHIP AND CHANGE, INC.
G/F Höffner Bldg., Social Dev't. Complex,
Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, QC,
or e-mail to rhea@clcl.ph .

IMMEDIATE HIRING!!!

A Shoe Manufacturing Company is in need of..

MARKETING COORDINATOR

Qualifications:

- Graduates of Marketing or any business related course
- Female - below 28 years old
- Willing to be assigned to field work
- With significant experience in retail & merchandising operations
- Willing to work long hours and on weekends
- With strong leadership & good communication/persuasive skills
- Mature, Hardworking, Dependable and Results-Oriented

Interested applicants may send their resumé to:

HR Department, 13 Oak St., New Marikina Subd., San Roque, Marikina City, Tel. No. 6820502-03

Email Address: bocalo@bocalo.com

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Cel: 63917-8188180; Email: standardphilippines@yahoo.com
www.standard immigration.com

TRINITY MARKETING, INC.
496 E.T. Yuchengco St., Binondo, Manila
Tel. 301-0909
Look for Ms. Fe Aguilar

TELEMARKETING PERSONNEL
- Male / Female, not more than 30 yrs. old
- Graduate of any 4-year course

SALES AGENT / ACCT. EXECUTIVE
- Male / Female, not more than 30 yrs. old
- Graduate of any 4-year course preferably Marketing major

CADET PLANT SUPERVISOR
- Male, not more than 30 years old
- Engineering graduate

ACCOUNTING PERSONNEL
- Male / Female, not more than 30 years old
- Accounting graduate

DELIVERY DRIVER
- Male, not more than 35 years old
- At least High School Graduate
- With Professional Driver's License

DELIVERY PERSONNEL
- Male, not more than 30 years old
- At least High School Graduate

INTERCONTINENTAL. HOTELS GROUP

EXPLORE THE MOST GLOBAL HOTEL COMPANY

InterContinental Hotels Group owns and manages a portfolio of well-respected brands recognized the world over. An industry pioneer, we are the largest hotel company by number of rooms and manage the world's largest loyalty program with 26 million members to date. Our expansion shows our commitment to sustained growth into the future. We seek enthusiastic, friendly people who will lend their talents to help us realize our vision of being the world's leading hospitality brand owner.

With more than 3,800 hotels in 6 continents across more than 100 countries, WE are the most global Hotel Company.

Our Philippine Reservations Center is looking for:

Customer Service Representatives / Reservation Sales Agents (English or Spanish)

Job Summary

- Represents the Company by coordinating all aspects of Priority Club Programs and serves as liaison between the guest and hotels in order to maintain member satisfaction
- Delivers Individualized Customer Experiences by focusing on finding hotel accommodations that will best fit our guests needs

Requirements

- Must be a Bachelor/College degree holder
- Must have excellent written and verbal communication skills with one of the following languages: English or Spanish
- Customer service and/or sales experience an advantage
- Education and experience in the hospitality or IT industry an advantage
- Must be willing to work on a rotating shift

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TEL 8578800

ADDRESS 29/F, Tower II, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue, Makati City

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I describe myself about where
...well, maybe I've confidence,
friendly person, responsible,
reliable and talented woman.
I felt when I'm already
a college graduate then
when I've got my first job,
I'm get nervous because you
don't know about attitudes
in your officemates.

Sadly, this was from a real job applicant.

English Proficiency Course now available.

Bring your English proficiency up to global, professional standards with the medical transcription specialists. We've used our extensive experience to develop an English Proficiency course that will improve your skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking in English. This will help enhance your chances in the job market. Call 899MTCA (8996822) for more details.

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Customers aren't the only people important to West – the employees are too! Don't be just another employee at just another company. Enjoy being treated as a person first at West!

Customer Care Representatives
Put your customer-oriented skills to use earning great money handling incoming customer calls in the healthcare or wireless phone industries. Depending upon assigned client, medical background or billing experience preferred. Excellent computer knowledge and English-speaking skills required.

Technical Support Representatives
College grads with computer-related degrees and IT professionals are needed to provide technical assistance to internet users. Excellent English communication skills required as well as strong working knowledge of computer and internet-related issues. Your previous experience will earn you more per hour!

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Fax: 857-7431/32
Email: MakatiJobs@west.com

westemployment.com

Compensation & Benefits Associate

Position Overview
- This person is knowledgeable and has hands-on experience in compensation and benefits administration, labor laws, government reportorial requirements, running employee programs and services. He/She is organized, methodical, analytical and meticulous in his work. He / She can conduct or recommend participation in surveys to ensure that the organization remains competitive in the industry. He is expected to provide recommendations to ensure that the compensation philosophy of the company is followed in terms of its position in the market.

Position Accountability Summary
- Recommend, administer and implement corporate programs in the areas of compensation and benefits
- Manage employee programs and services to keep highly qualified employees and maintain high-morale workforce
- Ensure the accuracy and timeliness of submission of all gov't requirements and reports.
- Performs job evaluation for new and revised position descriptions for monthly paid employees.
- Ensure that the company's policies and procedures are enforced and consistently followed.

Minimum Qualifications
- Bachelor's degree in any field (Business or appropriate technical discipline).
- Solid understanding of the HR process.
- A minimum of four years in the Food Industry with exposure to Manufacturing or in an HR consulting firm
- Strong time management / prioritisation and organisational skills.
- Ability to build strong relationships with employees at all levels in the organization, as well as the ability to communicate and work effectively within Kraft and be seen as a team player.
- Excellent presentation and communication skills (oral and written).

DP&R Analyst

Position Overview
- Successful candidate shall be responsible for the optimization of business performance and operating contribution through the implementation of demand and replenishment plans as well as sourcing strategies and product availability in the Philippines while ensuring optimization of cash flow through the strict control of finished product inventories.

Position Accountability Summary
- Ensure the integrity of the collaborative Forecasting Process, together with Sales, Marketing, and Financial Planning. Utilizes ForecastPro and the Forecasting Templates in generating baseline IMS forecasts and trends.
- Support SKU rationalization and provide active support in implementation of harmonization programs, ensuring continuing focus on Decomplexity, Excellence Program and KPIs measures.
- Generate and communicate Category/ Product Family planning volumes to ensure integrity of inputs to the sourcing plants.

Minimum Qualifications
- Bachelor's degree in Industrial Engineering (Business or appropriate technical discipline).
- A minimum of 2 years experience in Forecasting and Demand Planning with exposure to Logistics and Inventory Management
- Project management skills
- Quantitative analyses, e.g. statistics, cost/ financial- accounting, operations research
- Strong interpersonal relations, above average communication skills (oral and written)
- Negotiation/ collaboration skills

Kindly submit your letter of application along with an updated resumé to hrphils@kraftasia.com. Please indicate the position in the subject line.

There is no need to follow-up. We will only contact qualified shortlisted candidates.

Be Inspired. Be Rewarded. Be Yourself. Be KRAFT

Associate SRP Management Reports Analyst
(for Investments reporting and Fund Management/Custodian liaison)

Responsibilities
The position, under the general supervision of a professional staff, is responsible for the following tasks: i) participating in policy review and providing opinion on review recommendations and handling ADB protocol to initiate changes proposed by the policy review; ii) reviewing audited month-end reports from global custodian to verify that SRP assets are invested in accordance with policy guidelines; iii) reconciling records and net-asset-value calculation of securities held in portfolios as reported by investment managers and global custodian to ensure proper accounting of portfolio inventory; iv) preparing all reports related to Investment Activity; v) assisting in managing relationships between investment managers and global custodian for smooth and efficient post trade processing and reporting.

For more details about the position, please see http://www.adb.org/Employment/Local/default.asp

Reporting Arrangement
The position reports to the Senior Risk Management Specialist (SRP), Investments Division.

Selection Criteria
Specific criteria include
- suitability to undertake the responsibilities mentioned above at the required level.
- a Bachelor's degree, preferably in finance, accounting, economics, engineering, mathematics or statistics.
- at least five years of experience, preferably in international banking operations, pension fund investment or pension fund administration or accounting. Experience in other fields will be considered.
- a working knowledge of portfolio investment administration.
- a good understanding of the nature and behavior of global finance and capital markets and a strong foundation in investment principles and pension fund management.
- strong in written and oral communication.
- a high degree of numerical skills and advanced computer literacy.
- a keen understanding and knowledge of business protocols.

The Asian Development Bank's vision is a region free of poverty. Established in 1966 and headquartered in Manila, Philippines, ADB's multicultural staff come from about 50 member countries. ADB's Headquarters in Manila generally recruits its administrative staff locally from the Philippines. The position is for a three-year fixed-term appointment. ADB offers a highly competitive salary and benefits package applicable to local staff. While the position advertised is for ADB Headquarters in Manila, Philippines, ADB staff must be prepared to serve in any location outside its Headquarters at the discretion of Management.

Apply electronically, quoting **Ref. No. EXT-AS06-184(4)-TDID** and **job title** on subject line and attaching application form available on www.adb.org/Employment/appform.asp to e-mail address: CS-jobs@adb.org by **18 August 2006.**

Due to the expected large number of applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Applications lacking the job reference number and job title or using the wrong e-mail address will not be considered.

Asian Development Bank ADB

www.adb.org

Senior Market Research Assistant
(for Capital Markets)

Responsibilities
The position is responsible for undertaking market research for ADB bonds in the primary and secondary markets, monitors market data on interest/swap/money market rates, and gathers global market reports by various counterparts; prepares presentation materials for investors and ADB borrowers; calculates and updates indicative LIBOR-Based Loan (LBL) rates and assists in execution of LBL related swap transactions; and prepares briefing notes on various institutional investors/ countries.

For more details about the position, please see http://www.adb.org/Employment/Local/default.asp

Reporting Arrangement
The position reports to a Funding Officer and two Treasury Specialists.

Selection Criteria
Specific criteria include
- suitability to undertake the responsibilities mentioned above at the required level.
- a Bachelor's degree in banking, finance, business administration or other related disciplines.
- at least 5 years relevant experience.
- considerable treasury related experience and a comprehensive knowledge of relevant treasury procedures, guidelines and standard.
- understanding of the interactions between treasury and other work areas.
- solid numerical ability.
- excellent command of written and spoken English.
- proficiency with computer software in common use at multilateral organizations, including Power Point, Access and Excel, and knowledge of specialized treasury related software.
- proficiency in use of computer databases to input and extract information, and to generate standard and ad hoc reports.
- solid interpersonal skills and ability to provide work-related
- proven ability to work independently and set own work priorities.

The Asian Development Bank's vision is a region free of poverty. Established in 1966 and headquartered in Manila, Philippines, ADB's multicultural staff come from about 50 member countries. ADB's Headquarters in Manila generally recruits its administrative staff locally from the Philippines. The position is for a three-year fixed-term appointment. ADB offers a highly competitive salary and benefits package applicable to local staff. While the position advertised is for ADB Headquarters in Manila, Philippines, ADB staff must be prepared to serve in any location outside its Headquarters at the discretion of Management.

Apply electronically, quoting **Ref. No. EXT-AS06-185(4)-TDFD** and **job title** on subject line and attaching application form available on www.adb.org/Employment/appform.asp to e-mail address: CS-jobs@adb.org by **18 August 2006.**

Due to the expected large number of applications, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted. Applications lacking the job reference number and job title or using the wrong e-mail address will not be considered.

Asian Development Bank ADB

www.adb.org

Be a part of the country's premiere social security institution!

PASEGURUHAN NG MGA NAGLILINGKOD SA PAMAHALAAN
(GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM)
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila

The GSIS is looking for top caliber professionals to occupy two of its key positions.

Vice President – Physical Resources Office

The successful candidate must:
- ✓ Be a licensed Civil, Electrical or Mechanical Engineer, preferably with a Masteral degree
- ✓ Have at least 5 years managerial experience in building administration and maintenance, procurement and materials management and general services
- ✓ Possess core competencies in the areas of technical or process leadership, multiple team management and communication and relationship management

Manager – Engineering and Maintenance Department

The successful candidate must:
- ✓ Be a licensed Civil, Electrical or Mechanical Engineer, preferably with a Masteral degree
- ✓ Have at least 3 years supervisory experience in building and facilities administration and maintenance
- ✓ Possess core competencies in the areas of project management, team or technical supervision and communication and relationship management

Applicants must be between 35 to 50 years old. Applicants may submit their comprehensive resumes together with latest 2x2 ID picture to:

Ms. Mei G. Flores
Human Resources Manager
Human Resources Planning and Acquisition Department
5/F Core G, GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City 1307

Or you can email it to careers@gsis.gov.ph. Kindly indicate in the subject area the position title applied for.

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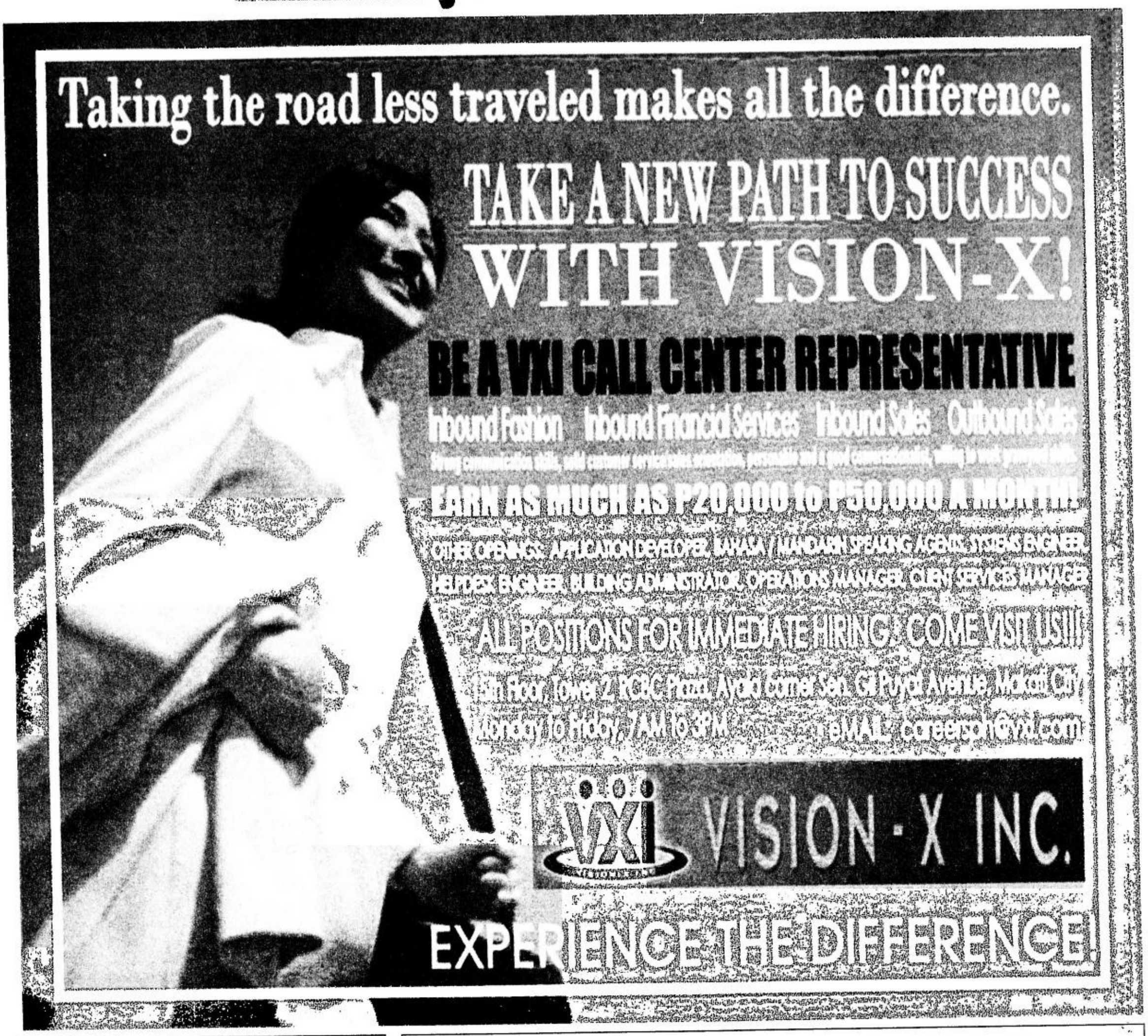
Advertise in JobMarket Compact.

Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.

Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.

JOBMarket



Local Government Development Foundation (LOGODEF)
Deputy Executive Director

The Local Government Development Foundation (LOGODEF) was founded in 1989 with the mission of empowering local authorities to be cornerstones of just and democratic societies. Over the last 17 years, the Foundation has earned a distinguished record in training and consulting for local governments in the Philippines and abroad. LOGODEF conducts evaluations and publishes policy analyses on governance issues of national and regional importance. It is part of several international networks and the facilitator of the East and Southeast Asia Network for Better Local Governments. Every 3 years, the Foundation awards outstanding local governments with the Konrad Adenauer Medal of Excellence (KAME).

The founder/Executive Director will reach retiring age soon. LOGODEF is therefore seeking a **Deputy Executive Director with the potential to take over the Executive Director position** following a transition period.

To ensure the future of the Foundation as a key player in better local governance in the country and region, the successful candidate must be innovative and entrepreneurial, have an advanced Degree (M.A. or Ph.D) in public policy, political science or other relevant field, at least five (5) years of progressively responsible field experience in development management, preferably related to local governments; excellent skills and track record as a manager, conceptualizer, and consultant, superb writing and presentation skills, and extensive experience in dealing with policy-makers, media and advocacy groups.

The position is an excellent opportunity for a relatively younger leader, possibly between the ages of 40 and 55, who has already collected considerable experience, and who aims to head and further develop an established and politically relevant NGO.

Applications will be coursed through LOGODEF's long-standing partner, the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung.

Please apply before August 31, 2006.

Address: Ms. Juliah Palacpac
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
3rd Floor, ALPAP I Building
140 Leviste Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City

ded
Deutscher Entwicklungsdienst

The German Development Service/DED
Manila Office

Is inviting applicants for the position of

Head of Finance & Administration

Qualifications:
- Fluent in oral and written German and English
- Experienced in bookkeeping and accounting
- Proficient in MS Office applications and Internet
- Excellent intercultural communication skills

Please send / e-mail your applications not later than August 25, 2006 to:

DED - German Development Service
11th Floor PDCP Bank Centre Building
V.A. Rufino cor. L.P. Leviste Sts.
Salcedo Village, 1227 Makati City
www.ded.ph
E-mail: ded@ded.ph

Only applications in German will be considered.

MasterCard Worldwide

SENIOR ACCOUNT MANAGER
CUSTOMER RELATIONS & ACCEPTANCE DEVELOPMENT
Location: Manila, Philippines

POSITION

Working as part of a team, the successful candidate will manage customer relations and credit card, deposit access and advanced payments products sales development with MasterCard customer financial institutions in the Philippines. The successful candidate will also oversee electronic and card-based payments acceptance development and growth initiatives with merchants and other payment partner entities. This position reports to the Country Manager.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- Identify and analyze business opportunities, through a thorough understanding of the payments industry, for the mutual benefit of both MasterCard and its customer financial institutions
- Grow and increase MasterCard-branded products and services distributed by customer financial institutions through consultative business development and sales activities
- Coordinate required services support between customer institutions and MasterCard global or regional offices
- Develop, manage and maintain merchant relationships, in cooperation with or independent of customer banks, to increase the manner and number of locations where MasterCard-branded payment products are accepted
- Actively contribute to and work for the achievement of local, regional and global MasterCard corporate objectives

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in business or related field
- Relevant mid- to senior-level business experience in account management, business development and/or sales within the financial services industry
- Experience in credit cards, retail payments and/or consumer banking preferred
- Demonstrated proficiency in handling and maintaining C-level business relationships
- Strong project management, interpersonal and analytical skills required
- Effective written and verbal communication, presentation and listening skills
- Able to successfully multi-task in a matrix and multi-priority work environment with minimum supervision

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY SEND THEIR CURRICULUM VITAE VIA OUR WEB-SITE AT:
www.mastercard.com (Please select Philippines as "Location" and Quick link "About the Company")

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES, PLEASE CONTACT EMILY WONG – HR DIRECTOR, GLOBAL STAFFING AT +65 6390 5917.

WALK-IN APPLICANTS AND PERSONALLY-DELIVERED/COURIERED APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE ENTERTAINED.

ONLY SHORT-LISTED CANDIDATES WILL RECEIVE A RESPONSE.

THE BEST COMPANIES NEED THE BEST PEOPLE.
Read it every Sunday with the Philippine Daily Inquirer and visit it online at www.jobmarketonline.com

HR graduate feels like a 'rolling stone'

I AM 28 YEARS OLD AND HAVE had a total of nine jobs but not one of them interested me enough to make me stay in one company and build my career there. I only stay five months in a certain job and then I either resign or just disappear. The longest I ever stayed in a company was 11 months. I don't know what I like. I don't have any direction in my life. My friends are already rooted in their jobs and succeeding in their careers but I continue to be a rolling stone that gathers no moss.

I'm a graduate of BSBA, major in human resource management. I had three shifts in majors in college and eventually went along with my friends who were majoring in HRM. I have no problem getting a job; I pass entrance tests and succeed in interviews. I've tried some of the HR functions but nothing appeals to me. I've tried selling jobs but I don't like the pressure that goes with having to meet quotas.

I don't know what career to go into since nothing interests me. My parents are frustrated with me and had refused my request to take up graduate studies. They made it clear to me that they were no longer financing any further studies. I know I must decide on a career but I don't know how to go about it. Please help me.

Ms Aimless

ASK YOUR CAREER COUNSELOR

Josie O. Santamaria

You feel pressured to make a career decision but you don't know what you want despite having had nine jobs. You don't know how to go about choosing the right career for you and making a career goal.

Let me assure you that you are not unique in this respect. There are other people spending many years in jobs but are not in the right careers. As a result, they don't experience joy and self-fulfillment in what they do. They do their tasks because they "have to" rather than because they "want to." Your parents are right in refusing to finance your graduate school education. If you don't have a career goal, a master's will not help you.

Take this seriously

I hope that what I will suggest, you will do, and that you will find them helpful. The first thing you must do is to decide that you want to make a career choice and set a career goal, and that you will undertake the suggested process seriously.

The second thing to do is to list down all the jobs you have had. Make three columns. In the first column, list down the things you did in the job that you liked/enjoyed doing. In the second column, list down the activities that you disliked or bored you.

From this initial activity, a pattern may emerge. Dr. John Holland classified careers into six categories: Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising and Conventional. Realistic careers require that you enjoy using manual and mechanical skills in handling objects, tools and equipment; Investigative careers require that you are data-oriented and that you enjoy gathering and analyzing data. Artistic careers require preference for unstructured environment and enjoyment of activities related to language, art, music, literature, music, drama, creative writing, etc.

Careers that require interaction with people are either Enterprising or Social. Enterprising careers involve leading and influencing people to achieve team/organizational goals or to pursue economic gain. Social careers are those related to helping other people: teaching and training; healing and curing; informing; developing them. Conventional careers require following a set structure; they involve the precise and ordered use of data such as keeping and filing, computing, printing, etc.

Determine your career area

Go back to the list of jobs you have had. In the third column, write the career area of the activity that you like. For example, teaching is Social and Investigate while training is Enterprising and Social. Computer skills are Realistic and Investigative. There are no careers that involve only one set of activities. If you take an interest test, the results will give you your major career area, followed by two others. An example is an ESA combination, i.e., Enterprising, Social and Artistic. This means that a person's interest has to do with leading people in creative activities that will be economically beneficial to the organization and to those being helped. Managerial, marketing and selling careers are examples of an ESA interest combination. You can take an interest test in testing centers, in workbooks on career planning, or even online.

Perhaps your career interests do not require a corporate setting. An AIR (Artistic, Investigative and Realistic) interest pattern is one that prefers an unstructured environment (where there are no rules and policies to follow, no boss to please), enjoys freedom of expression, is imaginative and creative with the use of things such as a computer, crafts, etc. If you have this kind of interest combination, you could be your own boss and operate a business right in your own home. But this means you will have no fixed and regular income. When you have projects, you make money; when you don't, you have none.

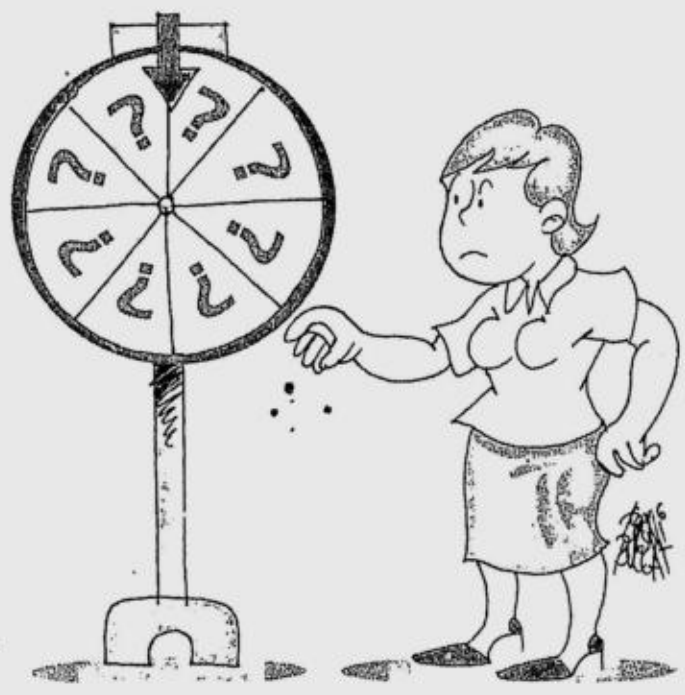


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

Once you have identified your combination of career interests, look up sections in newspapers such as the Sunday Inquirer's Job Market for corporate careers/jobs advertised in line with your career interests. Or you look up business opportunities or entrepreneurial careers in line with your interests.

Other factors

It's very important for you to know that interest alone does not determine your career. There are other important factors you have to consider: your skills and aptitudes, your intelligence and opportunities available in the environment to pursue your career interest, and earn in the process.

There are eight human intelligences, perhaps more: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily kinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal and naturalist. Each of these is expressed in particular interests or preferences. One with Enterprising and Social interests need to have interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence. Both interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence comprise Emotional Intelligence (EI) and measured by Emotional Quotient (EQ). IQ measures logical-mathematical and spatial intelligences.

You can also validate the above findings by doing a creative visualization activity. Take time out from your activities for the day and go to a quiet place where there are no distractions (no people to call you, no telephone and cell phone to ring, etc.). Take a comfortable sitting posture, either on a chair or on a mat/carpet. Close your eyes. Start breathing exercises to relax you. Once relaxed, mentally focus on a white light in front of you and see yourself three to five years from now. How do you look when you are happy? See your face and physical appearance. Visualize what you are doing that you enjoy immensely and where you are doing them. Embellish the vision with details. Be creative. Hold this vision for five minutes. Then, end the vision with breathing exercises that bring you back to the present. Write down the enjoyable activities and compare these with your career interests. These should be congruent.

You can also participate in a career planning workshop or avail yourself of the help of a professional career counselor. "My Life/Career Planning Workbook," which is available in National Bookstore, may help you. This workbook provides a process-based guide to help you explore career options, decide on the right career options from among these options, and set a career goal. It contains a number of self-assessment instruments including an interest inventory. It also guides you to decide on the right career path according to your personal mission in life. God bless you.

(Ms Santamaria is the president of Career Systems Inc., a leading provider of a wide array of career development training programs and consulting services. She has written the following books: "Career Counseling: Cases and Techniques," "Life/Career Planning Workbook," "Managing Work and Career," and "Managing Your Career To The Top," all of them available at leading bookstores. Send feedback about this career advice to carsys@careersystems.com.ph.*)*

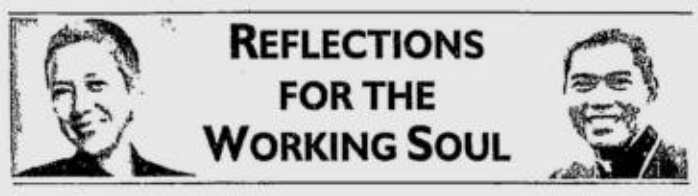
Transforming power within

By Bishop Precioso Cantillas, SDB, DD

IT IS AMAZING TO SEE MONUMENTAL WORKS OF ARTS, BREATHtaking man-made landscapes and awesome architectural designs of buildings, bridges and other engineering structures—these and many more works of human mind and genius—which have transformed the "face of the earth" or have "transfigured" the looks of our planet. These prodigious works of man could stir wonder and awe in anyone who wants to understand the inner value of his being and wishes to discover his own transforming potentials.

Jesus, who transfigured Himself before the three hand-picked Apostles in today's Gospel, seems to tell us that He could give the transforming power to anyone He chooses and who would follow where He would lead him. Even a simple ordinary worker who could not claim an award for any outstanding and world famous piece of art or edifice, could merit the grace from Jesus, who came to call even the "sinners and not the righteous," to transform his own life and work into something which are pleasing to men and society and even acceptable and worthy of God's esteem. The Transfigured Christ is the image of what every believer and doer of Christ's teachings would become.

A worker who is supposed to be already aware of his ability to "transfigure" things and structures through his brains and/or muscles, could also desire to transform higher or greater things—his human maturity, a steady growth in his spiritual life, his closeness/oneness with God, to mention some—and slowly realize these with the power of Christ's presence within the being of the worker-believer. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)



REFLECTIONS FOR THE WORKING SOUL

A winning career switch

By Teresa R. Tunay, OCDS

OBSERVE PEOPLE SWITCHING CAREERS AND SEE THE POWER OF work to transform individuals. Take the case of Ada. She went for a long-overdue vacation and came back after a month transformed, so to speak. Nothing changed physically about her—same hairdo and color, same makeup, didn't lose or gain weight, still wears the same uniform as a bank teller. But everybody in the office swore she was ... "blooming," as the girls love to say.

It wasn't long before she admitted to her office friends that she was not really "on vacation" the time she was gone, but was attending to the requirements of the next job she was to hold. She disclosed that she had submitted a resignation letter the day she returned, and that in two weeks' time she would start work as a hairstylist in a friend's salon. The revelation was met with raised eyebrows (even from friends). "What? A hairstylist?" It seemed the farthest thing from handling money daily as a bank employee. How could a salon job excite her?

It wasn't the salon job per se that caused Ada's transformation but the fact that she was now following her heart. She said that she was never that keen about working in a bank but because she had to go to college before she knew what career she wanted, her parents prevailed and chose it for her. Ever since she was a child Ada had always enjoyed fixing other girls' hair, and now she was going to do what she had always loved to do. Quitting a job we are lukewarm about and giving way to our passion makes us more alive. If you find yourself in the bank teller Ada's shoes, and no one seems to understand your urge to switch careers, find Jesus in your heart and do as He tells you. No matter what the world says, you'll come out a winner—guaranteed. (*E-mail the author at* mfvg@skyinet.net)

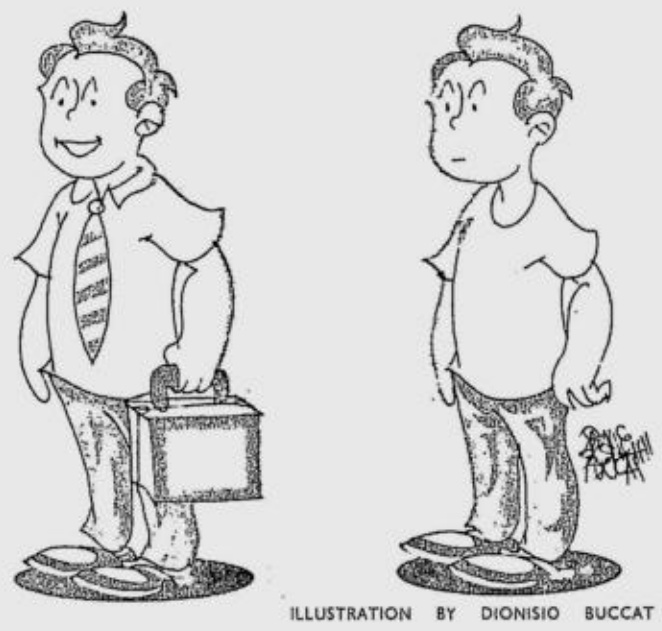


ILLUSTRATION BY DIONISIO BUCCAT

Gospel Mk. 9:2-10

After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John and led them up a high mountain apart by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his clothes became dazzling white...

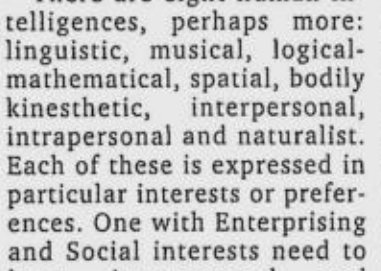
'I am a mother in distress!'

By Tita Datu Puangco

HI! MADAME, I AM A VERY distressed mother, from Davao City, because I worry about the education of my 15-year-old son, who's graduating from high school next year. I am worried I will not be able to send him to college, as we are experiencing financial difficulties. I have done all possible things just so I can send him to school these past three years. I have sold all my assets (though they are very few), I have debts left and right; we are a middle-class family, my husband works as a driver in a food chain store and receives P2,700 only every 15 days. His salary barely sustains us until his next paycheck.

I also have a three-year-old son. My teenage son is doing very well in school and it's a pity if he can't continue his education just because of our financial difficulties. May I ask your kind heart if you know of any foundation/scholarship that is willing to help my son go to college? He wants to pursue Mass Communication or Journalism. He's above average and usually in the Top 10 of his class. I don't know where and whom to turn to, I suffer from sleepless nights, you might say, I'm getting paranoid, yes it is true, only because I pity my son. Hope you can help me. Who to ask for help. Please help me! Thank you.

Distressed Mother



Advice FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

Thank you for your letter. I am addressing this reply not only to you but also to the seven other readers who sent similar letters of request. I am so overwhelmed by the letters of many people wanting to study but are short of funds. Every day I pray for all of you so that kind donors or educational foundations or even local governments would come forward to help. Often, I ponder and wonder how we can create a society where no one is in need.

The only solution is for us to begin to build a truly Christian society where sharing becomes the norm. I remember Chiara Lubich, foundress of the Focolare Movement who remarked, that we have to learn from nature—where a plant takes only from the soil the nutrients that it needs. This is so unlike men who keep on "storing in barns" worried about their security and saving for a comfortable retirement. It can happen only when the rich start to practice voluntary poverty. Everything that is in your closet that you do not use belongs to your brother in need. Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

I wish to propose to our readers who have money to spare to pool our extra resources, put them in a common fund and in a sense adopt students wanting to pursue their studies. We can inquire on each one's precise needs with sensitivity and compassion. We then provide the help to address specific requirements. In a recent school I attended on the economy of communion, I understood that help has to reach the point of reciprocity. The person has to reciprocate by helping another needy person to study once he or she becomes self-sufficient and gets a job.

If any of our readers desire to help, I can forward particular letters to you, so you can deal with each person with much love and care. Thank you.

(Ms Puangco is CEO of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, a training and consulting company specializing in strategy management, leading change, human resource systems, leadership and enterprise training. E-mail feedback to advice@ancillaedc.com.ph *or fax 892-2902. You may also check Ms Puangco's blog at* www.pinoyatwork.livejournal.com. *For other inquiries, please call 892-2895, 892-2896 or 892-2898.)*

The UNDP project "Hazards Mapping and Assessment for Effective Community-Based Disaster Risk Management Project (READY DRM Phase II)" is in search of a qualified candidate for the post of **Finance and Administrative Officer** to be based at NDCC-OCD in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

The project aims to address the problem of disaster risk management at the local level, with the intention of developing a systematic approach to community-based disaster risk management.

Finance and Administrative Officer

Duties and Responsibilities:

Specific Activities

1. Establish a sound financial and administrative system for the project, which will facilitate proper reporting of project inputs and accomplishments
2. Ensures that within the established systems, all check requests, receipt memos and adjusting journal entries are prepared with proper supporting documents as required by UNDP and GOP processes
3. Manages the equipment inventory of the project based on the baseline equipment inventory conducted by UNDP and GOP at the start of the project
4. Reviews the financial reports of the responsible agencies and prepares the consolidated annual and quarterly financial reports. S/he will ensure that the same is in accordance with the NEX Manual.
5. Coordinates with and assists the responsible agencies in the preparation of the required periodic reports
6. Maintains books and records of the executing agency in line with generally accepted accounting principles
7. Assist in the conversion of the READY DRM Phase II Project Document into the UNDP Results Based Management method
8. Assist in the annual project audit conducted by UNDP
9. Review ATLAS data forwarded by UNDP for verification
10. Other duties and responsibilities related to the READY DRM Project

Qualifications :

1. Graduate of a business related course with at least 2 years experience in accounting
2. Experience in handling foreign-assisted projects. Preference will be given to those with experience in handling UNDP projects
3. Knowledge of Microsoft Office applications, especially MS Word and Excel
4. Knowledge of government accounting and financial management
5. Ability to communicate in English, both written and oral
6. Procurement experience is an advantage

The United Nations strongly encourages applications from qualified women candidates.

While the project offers an equal employment opportunity, only Filipino professionals are invited for these specific posts.

All application letters and comprehensive resumes should reach our office on or before 16 August 2006. Address applications to the Development Support Services Center, United Nations Development Programme, 30th Floor, Yuchengco Tower, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue 1226 Makati City (via courier) or P.O. Box 7285 Domestic Airport Post Office Lock Box 1300 Domestic Road, Pasay City (via airmail), tel. nos. (63 2) 901 0100.

This advertisement shall remain posted in www.undp.org.ph until 16 August 2006.

Wyeth

Leading the Way to a Healthier World

We are a leading global nutritional and pharmaceutical company and offer compensation and benefits package above industry level to the successful candidates. We are immediately in need of the following positions for our Canlubang plant:

Plant Maintenance Services Manager
(CODE: PMSM)

Functions:
Manages the provision of logistics and information support in the effective implementation of preventive and predictive maintenance programs. Handles the procurement of plant machines and equipment, spare parts, all other Engineering materials, including the procurement of outside technical and professional services. Supervises the spare parts and other Engineering materials inventory to support or to help improve plant operations. Oversees the maintenance and operation of Makati Office building grounds and facilities.

Qualifications:
- ❑ With Bachelor's Degree in Engineering (ME, EE) or any other Engineering related course
- ❑ Has five (5) to ten (10) years managerial/supervisory related experience
- ❑ Knowledgeable in inventory and purchase management, software implementation, PM planning and scheduling, equipment and facility maintenance.

Shopstores Supervisor
(CODE: SS)

Function:
Ensures the timely availability of quality Maintenance, Repair and Operation (MRO) supplies, effective utilization of computerized inventory management system, control inventory to optimal level in line with Company policies and objectives.

Qualifications:
- ❑ College graduate preferably in Engineering or related technical background
- ❑ At least two (2) years experience in inventory management and operation of computerized inventory system; knowledge in technical specifications and quality inspection of Engineering materials
- ❑ With background in software implementation and is computer proficient (AS/400, Word, Excel, Power Point, Access, etc.)
- ❑ Good oral and communication skills

Qualified applicants are requested to send their updated resumé to the given postal/email address below not later than **August 11, 2006**:

HRD Department
Wyeth Philippines, Inc.
2236 Chino Roces Ave.
1231 Makati City
Code:_____
Email add: recruitment@wyeth.com

Previous applicants need not apply. We will only reply to qualified applicants.

MAKATI

ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR
MANAGER / TRAINER

- ▸FEMALE, 30-45 years old, College Graduate
- ▸Superb Excellent communication Skills & Computer literate
- ▸A Great Abundance of Teaching Experience

ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR

- ▸FEMALE, 20-35 years old, College Graduate
- ▸Excellent communication skills & computer literate
- ▸Teaching or Call center Experience

For inquiries call 892-3394 or send your resumé to
yuddia@gmail.com

JOB Compact

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Sundays in Inquirer JobMarket and Wednesday in JobMarket Compact.

Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.

JOB Market

Your skills can change lives.
That's a fair trade.

Regional Make Trade Fair Campaign Co-ordinator

£18,798 - £24,879 pa plus benefits
Hanoi, Vietnam
(with option of Manila, Jakarta or Phnom Penh. Bangkok base possible for Thai national's only)

Without access to fairer trading regimes, millions of people in the developing world suffer poverty caused by the richer nations restricting trade. Dumping, quotas, forced liberalisation, poor labour laws and prohibitive patents all contribute to make international trade favour the rich industrialised countries and penalise the poorer ones. Here at Oxfam, we're actively working to change this system and Make Trade Fair. Which brings us to you.

You'll take responsibility for the development, co-ordination and delivery of our Make Trade Fair (MTF) campaign in East Asia, ensuring it contributes to and complements our global strategy. With the aim of making the biggest impact, you'll use a range of skills, including research, advocacy, networking, media and popular mobilisation skills. This will enable you devise and deliver an innovative campaign.

Representing Oxfam in meetings, you'll develop strong relationships and alliances with a variety of stakeholders, as well as shape and manage resources for our campaign. In addition, you must build the capabilities of staff and partners across the region, ensuring synergy between the MTF campaign and Oxfam's livelihoods programme. And, you must provide specialist advice on trade and economic justice policy and communicate these complex issues to a wider audience.

The vital nature of this role means you'll have a proven track-record in leading major campaigning initiatives, together with specialist knowledge in trade and economic justice policies. Able to actively campaign for social change, you'll be able to draw on experience of policy analysis and advocacy work, as well as negotiating with different stakeholders. With an understanding of large, complex organisations, you'll also be able to deploy your knowledge of international development and micro/macro economic policy.

To change lives for the better, start by visiting www.oxfam.org.uk/jobs quoting ref: INT1803 for further information and details of how to apply. For information about Oxfam's Make Trade Fair campaign go to www.maketradefair.com

Closing date: 13 August 2006.

Interviews will be held in Bangkok in early September 2006.

Oxfam works with others to overcome poverty and suffering

Oxfam

URGENTLY NEEDED

We are searching for an **SALES/MARKETING MANAGER** for stock photos to assume responsibility immediately

Candidate must be with creative and savvy marketing skills who will take charge of the highly growing business of stock photos and lead a sales team

- Male or Female between 25-30 years old
- Degree in Advertising or Marketing
- With excellent communication and presentation skills
- Knowledgeable in graphic design and interest in photography is a plus
- Result oriented, team player and trustworthy
- Hard-working, resourceful, organized and willing to learn
- With existing accounts is an advantage

Interested applicants may submit their resumé with recent picture to:

DAIICHI COLOUR, INC. (Manila)
A member of Daiichi Colour Group of Hongkong
Suite 703 Prestige Tower Condominium
F. Ortigas Jr. Road, Ortigas Center
Pasig City 1605 Philippines
Tel. (0632) 687-5359 / 60 * Fax : (0632) 638-9179
Or may email their resumés at daiichi@othk.com

Rapidé
AUTO SERVICE EXPERTS

THE LARGEST AUTOMOTIVE SERVICE CHAIN IN THE COUNTRY IS EXPANDING AND OPENING MORE SERVICE CENTERS.

IS IN URGENT NEED OF:

TECHNICAL TRAINER

Must have minimum of 3 years experience in Sales and Automotive training. Adept in conducting seminars, module preparation & training needs analysis. Able to motivate and deliver competent people.

SERVICE CENTER MANAGERS/ASST. SERVICE CENTER MANAGERS

Will be responsible for running the day-to-day store operations which involves managing the store crew to implement Rapidé systems & standards, ability to increase store sales volume, as well as dealing with customers to ensure satisfaction. Previous sales, management & technical auto repair knowledge a MUST!

AUTOMOTIVE TECHNICIANS (MECHANICAL & AIRCONDITIONING)

Must have a minimum of 2 years experience gained from an automotive service company. With thorough knowledge of steering, suspension, wheel alignment, brakes, under chassis, car troubleshooting, auto aircon systems, mechanical and electrical diagnosis, leak detection, minor engine trouble and electrical problems. Earn up to 25T/month.

Interested parties should indicate the position code and may apply in person or send comprehensive resume, recent photo & contact number to:
HRD DEPARTMENT, 1166 CHINO ROCES AVE., MAKATI CITY
CONTACT NO.: 899-4472/74 LOCS 115/102 LOOK FOR MR. VINZ
You may also e-mail your resume to hrad_rapide@yahoo.com.ph

The Travel & Tours Shop *is in need of a dynamic staff for immediate hiring in our Masinag, Antipolo Office.*

RESERVATION OFFICER

- Tourism graduate or related field
- Preferably with experience on domestic and international reservations/ticketing and knowledgeable in Amadeus CRS
- A resident of Marikina, Antipolo, Cainta or eastern Quezon City
- Knowledge in computer programs specially Adobe Photoshop or Corell, typing and writing skills is a plus.

Send resume with contact details ASAP via email at: **travelshop1999@yahoo.com.** Only shortlisted candidates will be contacted for interview.

ARCHITECTS

TO HANDLE UPSCALE RESIDENTIAL & POPULAR COMMERCIAL PROJECTS

- Licensed Architect with at least 5 years work experience
- Background in construction management is an advantage
- Must be creative, self-driven and hard working
- Able to lead and work with groups

Send your resumé to:

D&J Itsumo Design-Build Co. Inc.
Manila Mahogany Compound, No. 538 MRR Road,
Manggahan, Pasig City • Tel. No. 682-5534

PETRA FOODS LIMITED — Delfi®

*One of the world's major manufacturers and suppliers of industrial cocoa ingredients and a manufacturer & distributor of chocolate confectionery products. Listed on the Main Board of Singapore Exchange (SGX). In line with our business expansion we are inviting qualified candidates to join our subsidiaries, **DELFI Foods, Inc. and DELFI Marketing, Inc.** in the Philippines.*

PRODUCT RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT SPECIALISTS

- Female
- College Graduate with a degree in Food Technology, Chemistry or Chemical Engineering
- At least 5 years experience in food product and packaging development or improvement, 25-35 years old
- Experience in Chocolate and Sugar Confectionery R&D is an advantage
- Innovative, patient and meticulous in handling projects
- Team player
- Computer Literate
- Fresh Graduates are also encourage to apply, 20-25 years old

MECHANICAL ENGINEER

- Male, 35 – 40 years old
- Licensed Mechanical Engineer
- With 5-8 years experience in a Manufacturing Environment preferably in Food Manufacturing
- With basic knowledge in Production/Maintenance Planning, Factory Safety, Building Maintenance, Factory utilities, Special Projects Undertaking and functions in factory operations
- Good understanding of automation and packing line process
- Knowledgeable in managing manufacturing performance and continuous improvement
- Adequate computer skills

SALES REPRESENTATIVES

- Male / Female
- Experience not necessary
- College Graduate
- Good in oral and written communication
- Team player
- Computer Literate
- With driver's license
- Willing to be assigned anywhere in the Philippines

MARKETING SPECIALISTS

- Male/Female
- College Graduate with a degree in Management, Marketing or related field from a reputable University
- With Good oral and written English and Filipino Communication Skills.
- Proficient in Windows Office Programs (MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint).
- Good sales experience is an advantage.
- Should have an amiable and pleasing personality and possesses excellent people relation skills.

Interested applicants may send their application letter, comprehensive resume with 2x2 colored picture and transcript of records to:

GM-HR DEPARTMENT
DELFI Foods, Inc./DELFI Marketing, Inc.
23 M. Tuazon Street, Parang Marikina City
Tel no: 941-3592
marieantonette.floresca@delfifoods.com

acer

Acer, one of the top and leading PC vendor in the Philippines is inviting experienced, people-oriented and top caliber professional to fill in the position of:

MIS OFFICER

- Can manage and configure servers, routers, switches, notebook and desktops
- Can use and configure windows 2003, Lotus Notes, MFGPRO, SQL and ORACLE
- Must be knowledgeable regarding TCP/IP, routing and internet

We are looking for applicants who are:
- graduates of computer related course from reputable universities
- with excellent communication skills
- flexible, pro-active, goal-oriented, highly motivated and a team player

Qualified applicants may submit their resumes with recent 2x2 colored ID photo not later than August 10, 2006 at the following addresses:

Acer Philippines, Inc.
Human Resource Department
Unit 3401, 34th Floor, PBCom Tower 6795 Ayala Ave., cor. Herrera St.,1226 Makati City.
or e-mail: alma_rada@acer.com.ph

Marketing Executives

- ★ College graduate from a reputable school
- ★ Between 22 to 30 years old
- ★ Preferably with Real Estate business background
- ★ Wide range of contacts from class A & B market
- ★ Requirements:
  - + Computer literate
  - + Good communication skills
  - + Has a keen eye for details

... we are also looking for ...

Real Estate Brokers

with Sales and Client network is a plus

This is an urgent requirement, interested parties may submit their resumés through stargroupasia_mngt@yahoo.com.ph

STARGROUP ASIA MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
28th Floor, The Enterprise Tower 2
Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

LEGAL SECRETARY

for an established law firm in Manila

Requirements:

- Female, at least 25 years old.
- Preferably a degree in Legal Management, Political Science, Public Administration, Interdisciplinary Studies or any related course from major schools.
- At least 2 years work experience in a law office.
- Working knowledge of legal procedures, legal documentation, etc...
- Preferably with work experience in a law firm, courts, or as an Executive Secretary in multinational firms.
- Excellent computer skills and internet savvy
- Background in over-all office management

We offer a highly competitive compensation package with additional perks and privileges.

Mail your resumé to:
CHUIDIAN LAW OFFICES
Suite 1702 & 14 10 Sunset View Tower,
2230 Roxas Boulevard,
Pasay City, 1302 Philippines

The local counterpart of one of the largest assistance companies in the world with 3,500 employees providing 24/7 emergency assistance services to over 115 million members worldwide, is inviting top-caliber applicants to join its expansion program for the following positions:

▪ GENERAL ACCOUNTANT ASSISTANT (2)

- ☑ A College Degree holder in Accountancy or any equivalent course with at least one year of working experience in the Accounting Department as an accounting assistant;
- ☑ Willing to render extended working hours and manifests potential for career advancement;
- ☑ Well organized and systematic; capable and ready to perform multi-tasks; has a keen eye for details: above-average analytical skills and computer literate.

▪ DATA ENCODERS

- ☑ Candidate must have at least a College degree in any computer related course;
- ☑ Required skill(s): Computer literate; typing speed of 35-45 words per minute; keen attention to details;
- ☑ Preferably six (6) months working experience and willing to work in and outside Makati area;
- ☑ Candidate must be trustworthy, sociable and can work efficiently under pressure with minimum supervision

▪ COMPANY NURSE/MEDICAL SECRETARY

- ☑ Preferably female not more than 30 years old;
- ☑ Candidate must be a registered nurse with at least six (6) months of working experience in a related field;
- ☑ Above average customer service skills; proficient communication and computer skills; highly reliable and knows how to handle confidential information.

Interested applicants may send their resume with recent picture, transcript of records and other pertinent credentials to:

EA Philippines, Inc.
3rd Floor, 6788 Bldg Ayala Avenue, 1226 Makati City
E-mail: hrd_eaphils@yahoo.com

A BIG AND EXPANDING FOOD COMPANY URGENTLY NEEDS

2-ACCOUNTING/ CUSTOMER SERVICE STAFF

Qualifications:

- Female
- 21-26 years old
- Graduate of any business course
- Newly graduate may apply

Send to: U.P. P.O. Box 15, Diliman QUEZON CITY 1101

- comprehensive resumé
- records of grades
- 2x2 or 1x1 ID picture

PSI celebrates anniversary

PURPOSEFUL Stewardship Institute is inviting all PSI Leadership seminar graduates to celebrate the 20th Anniversary of PSI Philosophy in the Philippines. The celebration, dubbed "Essence in Harmony", will be on Aug. 26, 4PM at the Eugenio Lopez Center, Antipolo City.

The affair is hosted by Purposeful Stewardship Institute, a training organization on personal empowerment through the teaching of personal leadership and success principles.

Registration is ongoing. For details, contact: Camille Martinez/Vickie T. Vicente at (02) 521-6038/ (02) 498-1770 (Manila); Anna So at (074) 619-1233 (Baguio); Doris Alcoseba at (032) 233-2543/ (0927) 9739619 (Cebu); Bonz Dolor at (0917) 8218291 (Region 4); Maimai Jalandoni at (0918) 9182244 (Iloilo); or Mayor Diding Madrona at (0918) 9414690 (Romblon).

For more registration and event details, visit www.psi20thanniversary.com, or email at psileadershipseminars@yahoo.com.

A Makati-Based Firm Immediately Needs

▫ Internal Auditors

- 2 years experience, with more being a plus
- Certifications, while not required, are a plus (CPA, CISA, CFE, CIA).
- Willingness to work outside Metro Manila or the Philippines is a plus
- Must be fluent in written and spoken English. Knowledge of a main Chinese language, Japanese or Korean, while not necessary, is a plus
- Must know basic computer applications (e.g., Excel, Word, etc.). Other technology skills are a plus

▫ Researchers/ Corporate Analysts

- 2 years experience, with more being a plus
- Good research skills in economics or business. Ability to analyze corporate financial statements is a plus
- Must be able to write well in English. Knowledge of other foreign languages a plus

Email your resumé to: jobs@verisant.net or mail to MCPO Box 1683, Makati City 1256 Philippines

Voted "Most Outstanding Immigration Consultant by the Phil. Marketing Excellence Awards -2005"
ASIA'S number "1" consultant in terms of migrant's approval in New Zealand

Sampang Immigration Consultants

NEW ZEALAND THE BEST CHOICE FOR MIGRATION

ARE YOU ONE OF THE FOLLOWING?

Engineer, IT Specialist/Professional. Professor, Accountant. Hotel Supervisor. Travel Consultant. Social Worker. Pharmacist Psychologist. Teacher, Graphic Artist/Designer. Film Animator. Agriculturist, Horticulturist, Agronomist, Microbiologist. Doctor Nurse, Veterinarian. OB-Gyne, Medi Lab Tech, Radiographer, Food Tech, Dentist, Dental Tech. Dietician, Chemist. Surveyor, Physical/Occupational Therapist. Auto Mechanic. Bldg. Manager/Inspector/Foreman, Electrician, Technician, Machinist Printer, Plumber, Carpenter, Car painter, Glazier etc

We are dedicated to providing honest and straightforward service to ALL wishing to migrate.
That is why our Initial Assessments are FREE!
WHY? Simply because if you do not measure up to NZIS requirements, we do not wish to waste your time, money or HOPE.

English, IELTS not a requirement.

Invitation to apply for residence still at 100 points

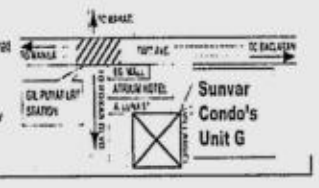
SEMINARS –

MANILA office - Saturday 10:00 am
SAN PABLO City - Saturday 4:00 pm

For reservations (San Pablo City), please contact us at Tel. Nos. (049) 5611386 / 09157489507/ 09178447962

Consultation – Monday to Saturday/ Any time
Telephone & walk-in inquiries are welcome

SAMPANG IMMIGRATION CONSULTANTS:
Unit G Sunvar Condo cor. A. Luna & Villaruel Sts., Pasay City *near Gil Puyat LRT station, opposite to ATRIUM HOTEL*
Tel No.: 834-6119 / 833-5862
0917-8447962 / 0922-8211611 for info about this company. New Zealand or general queries please email:



CREATIVE TEAM LEADER

WE ARE A 3D VISUALISATION STUDIO WHOSE FOCUS IS ON ARCHITECTURAL PRESENTATIONS & COMMERCIAL PROJECTS WORLDWIDE.

WE ARE CURRENTLY ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR A **TEAM LEADER** WHO HAS:

- PROVEN ABILITIES TO LEAD A CREATIVE TEAM & MEET DEADLINES
- ABILITY TO PROBLEM SOLVE & TAKE CHARGE
- WELL ROUNDED
- HAS STRONG ABILITIES IN ALL ASPECTS OF 3D ANIMATION
- HAS WORKING KNOWLEDGE OF 3D STUDIO MAX

SEND YOUR BIO DATA TO:
a_challenge_awaits@yahoo.com

LAMP2 is funded with grant aid for Technical Assistance from the Australian Government and World Bank loan to the Philippines Government. The Technical Assistance Team needs a

COMMUNICATION ADVISER

Applicants may email their CV with cover letter and at least 2 references to palamp1@mindgate.net or fax to 9281176. The position is 5-month engagement period commencing immediately. The full Terms of Reference are available upon request. ***Deadline for Submission: 5:00 p.m., Friday 11 August 2006***

Land Equity International contracts and manages the grant funding for Technical Assistance. Please log on to www.landequity.com.au, for detailed information about the company and to www.phil-lamp.org for the project information.

2 2 Galleries

RICCO RENZO CAFFE and GALLERIES urgently needs **ACCOUNTING ASSISTANTS** with the following qualifications:

- Male or female, Accounting Graduate
- 21 – 35 years old
- Must have taken/attended CPA review; Either non-CPA or CPA is acceptable
- With at least 2 years experience/exposure in restaurant/food line of business
- Computer-literate; knowledge in any accounting software is a plus
- Good communication skills
- Results-oriented, proactive, self-driven, motivated and patient
- Excellent health; non-smoker

A promising career in the field of finance and accounting awaits successful aspirants. Please visit our website, **www.riccorenzo.com**, for more information on the nature of our business.

Interested parties may email resumés and photos to:
Jun Merino at **adm_associates@yahoo.com** or
Stella Arcilla at **eda@riccorenzo.com** or fax to 898-2542 c/o Stella

FULL- & PART-TIME JOBS

- **English/Masscom graduates** for seminar & publishing work.
- **Writers and editors** with writing and copyediting experience newspaper layout artists for part-time jobs. Call: ***ExecEdit***, tel. 887-3797 / -98, execedit@mozcom.com

HR Focus

Step @ 10 and growing

SKILLS AND TALENT EMPLOYMENT Pool Inc (STEP) is celebrating its 10th anniversary this month. Located at units 1502 and 1708 of One San Miguel Bldg., San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, it has expanded its operation to two (2) satellite offices for the CALABARZON area. Its clientele belongs to the top 5,000 corporations.

STEP's vision is to be the service contractor of choice by dynamic, progressive and growing companies because they share the same vision and passion of delivering quality products and services. STEP strictly adheres to integrity, competence and professionalism in the conduct of its business. It also aims to set the standard by adopting acceptable and above board business practices in the industry of service contracting. It places God in the center of its organization. To create balance between profitability and compassion, STEP provides for its workforce just compensation and complies with the legally mandated benefits.

"We do give payroll and benefits to our work force - On Time All The Time - and we are striving to stir STEP into being a model of corporate efficiency through innovation on systems and methodologies. For July, our anniversary month, we have scheduled series of learning seminars for our in-house staff. This is to hone their skills for continuous learning and improvement or KAIZEN and to better equip them in dealing with various needs and demands of the clients. Humbly, I know, we are not perfect, and there are still room for improvement in the coming years, but we're getting there!"

"Our purpose in being is to provide gainful employment to many Filipinos as we can, so their families can have a better life. And with this noble purpose, if I succeed, then I will be fulfilled with my life". A statement given by Step's President and CEO, Lilia Linda Ang, the company's president and the 2005 President of the Phil. Association of Local Services and Contractors, Inc. (PALSCON) in a speech during the agency's anniversary celebration.

How to catch company thieves

TRUTH VERIFIER SYSTEMS INC. (TVSI), one of the leading detective agencies in the country, has announced yesterday that it will be conducting anew its signature workshop on company theft to be held on Aug. 15, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Republic Flour Mills (RFM) Auditorium in Pioneer Street corner Sheridan Street, Mandaluyong City.

Capt. Conrado G. Dumlao, President of TVSI, said that the workshop is aimed at helping companies increase employee productivity levels by reducing, if not totally eliminating unnecessary losses from unmonitored fraud, internal theft and other illegal activities.

Topics to be discussed are Psychology and Physiology of Lying, Internal and External Fraud Schemes, Conducting Investigation, Hotline Tips System of Reporting and Legal Aspects of Fraud Investigation.

For queries, you may get in touch with Donna or Marietta at Tel. Nos. 635-5929 or 635-5985, Fax No. 634-7569 or E-mail us at ctval@truthverifier.com

Jack Canfield, Live in Manila!

FOR THE FIRST TIME JACK CANFIELD, founder and co-creator of the best-selling book series Chicken Soup for the Soul, is coming to Manila on October 2 for this year's second ITD-Mega Guru Event: Personal Excellence and Organizational Success. Canfield is also author of what is touted as the best book on personal development, "The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be". During the event, Canfield will highlight key points in The Success Principles that zero in on accelerating the achievement of personal and professional goals, as well as further expound on their practical application in other areas of life.

Canfield has over 110 titles in print and 100 million books sold in 46 languages, including "Self-Esteem & Peak Performance", "The Power of Focus" and "Dare to Win". He is the world's leading success coach and authority on peak performance and he holds the Guinness World Record for having seven books simultaneously on The New York Times® Best Sellers list. He is the founder and Chairman of Canfield Training Group and Chicken Soup for the Soul

CANFIELD

Enterprise which trains entrepreneurs, educators, corporate leaders as well as their employees. He is also the founder of The Foundation for Self-Esteem which provides self-esteem resources and training to social workers, welfare recipients and human resource professionals.

The ITD-Canfield Mega Guru Event will be held on October 2 at the Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila. Register now and avail of special early bird rates. For details, please call ITD Consulting Group at 887-7428 or email itdmanila@itd.com.my.

LINA GROUP OF COMPANIES

We are in need of dynamic and competent individuals to join our TEAM.

All candidates must have strong human relations / interpersonal skills, ability to work well under pressure and adapt to changing work demands and conditions.

QUALITY CONTROL DIRECTOR

(Aircraft Maintenance)

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES REQUIRED

- Bachelor's Degree / Equivalent in Aircraft Maintenance Engineering or a related Technical Discipline
- 8 Years of significant experience in Airline Maintenance including demonstrably successful management experience (E.G., High Performance Rating)
- Thorough knowledge of Federal Aviation Regulations, and ATO Regulations
- Maintenance/ Inspection Programs and training methods and requirements for Airline Mechanics, Inspectors
- Thorough knowledge of Engineering principles, Aircraft Construction and Maintenance/Inspection practices required.
- Strong Management skills, Human Relations and Communication Skills
- FAA Mechanic A&P License
- Ability and background to obtain FAA – Inspector Authorization (I.A.)

For interested applicants pls. Contact:

Or call the Recruitment Section @ 879-4447 / 879-4511 look for Kaye, Sean or Noreen

Licensee of FedEx UBE Mail More LBTW Konek DOS WM Corporate Air

Korean Translator Wanted

A work from home full time position responsible for translating website content from Korean to English. Self-motivated, able to deliver quality work and meet tight schedules. Must have excellent command of written English and Korean language. Experience in financial/legal translation an advantage. Proficient in PC applications - MS Word, Excel, Email, Internet. Salary would be around P20,000 per month.

JUNIOR STOCK MARKET ANALYST

A work from home full time position responsible for writing analysis on listed equity transactions. Must have relevant degree. Self-motivated and strong analytical thinking. Detail oriented and good at numbers. Excellent command of written and spoken English. Able to work under pressure. Proficient in PC applications – Excel, Word, Email, Internet. Starting salary at P12,500 per month.

Kindly forward your letter of application and CV to admin@asia-insider.com

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

- Male/Female, single.
- Required Skills: Corel Draw, Adobe photoshop, Macromedia Flash, Microsoft Office, Dreamweaver or Frontpage.
- Creative, good memory, trustworthy, multi-tasker, patient and can work under pressure.

ACCOUNTING ASSISTANTS

- Female, single.
- Graduate of BS Accounting or any related course.
- Required skills: computer literate, strong personality, good memory, excellent communication and customer service skills, preferably with letter writing skills, Multi-tasker, Responsible and Trustworthy.
- Billing and collection of accounts receivables, preparation of statement of accounts for collection.
- Positive attitude

MARKETING AND SALES PERSONNEL

- Male/Female, willing to travel.
- Graduate of any related course with sales experience a plus.
- Hired candidates will be tasked to assist a team of sales personnel to achieve the company's sales target such as preparation of proposals and coordinating customer needs with various departments, do telemarketing and client calls.
- He/She must be customer oriented, have excellent telephone skills and knowledge of all Microsoft computer applications such as Word, Excel and Power point.
- Work experience in any administrative capacity would be an advantage, can work under pressure.

WEB DESIGNERS

- Male/Female.
- Must have experience and have a portfolio of past works in CD or indicate hyperlinks to be submitted for consideration.
- Intermediate level to advanced level with the following computer programs: Microsoft Office, Dream Weaver and Fireworks, Front page (or comparable programs) and web statistic tools.
- Intermediate analytical skills.
- Should have an understanding of database structures, tables and fields.
- Ability to learn and design with VSP (Virtual Space Planning) desktop
- With excellent communication skills.

All applicants must be willing to work in Valenzuela City, willing to travel, Loves Challenging Work, Multi-tasker, Creative and Responsible.

Send your resumé to hr@pinnacleasia.com
and mail to: Pinnacle Asia
500 4th St., Fortune Village 5,
Paso de Blas, Valenzuela City

OLYMPIA

SALES REPRESENTATIVES

Qualifications:

- At least 2 years of Electronics, Marketing and any other business related courses
- Computer literate
- With experience in selling ECR/POS machines and office equipments
- Fast learner / to handle dealer sales network
- Not more than 35 years old

Applicants may submit their complete resumé with pictures to:

OLYMPIA PHILIPPINES INC.
1402-1408 Pres. Quirino Avenue
cor. South Superhighway
Paco, Manila

IMMEDIATE HIRING

BERNARDINO GENERAL HOSPITAL

IS IN NEED OF LICENSED:

- NURSES
- PHARMACIST
- MED. TECH.
- RAD. TECH.
- MIDWIVES

PLEASE CALL:

Ms. Mercy Figueroa at 935-7213
Branch: #680 Quirino Highway, San Bartolome, Novaliches, Quezon City

Ms. Tess Segura at 935-5262 · 418-6684
Branch: Zabarte Road, Brgy. Kaligayahan, Novaliches, Quezon City

bernardinogenhosp@yahoo.com

WANTED

Total Consultancy Services, Inc., a Consulting Firm engaged in Engineering Consultancy and Manpower Services needs the following:

A) DESIGN ENGINEERS
3 Architects
3 Civil Engineers
3 Mechanical Engineers
3 Electrical Engineers

At least 10 years work experience as Design Engineers Experience in designing high rise buildings is a must.

B) TECHNICIANS
Industrial Electricians
Industrial Mechanics
Plumbers
Welders

At least 3 years work experience in an industrial plant.
Preferably graduates of Dualtech, MFI or Don Bosco

Interested applicants may send their biodata to Total Consultancy Services, Inc., Unit 402 Danarra Condominium, Metropolitan Ave. cor. Mola St., Makati City or may call Cathy at tel. nos. 8962591 or 8964187 to schedule an interview.

JOB Market COMPACT

Need quality applicants from Luzon?

Advertise in JobMarket Compact.

Inquire about the JobMarket package at 897-8808 loc 514.

Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.

JOB Market

Reaching New Heights — HYUNDAI Global City Hub

We are inviting young, dynamic people to join us in our expansion program as

SALES CONSULTANTS

- Male or Female, not more than 40 years of age
- Graduate of any 4-year collegiate course
- Sales experience in any related field an advantage
- Proficient in both oral and written English communication
- Driving skills an advantage

SERVICE ADVISORS

- Male, not more than 35 years of age
- Graduate of any engineering or related course
- Customer-oriented and with good oral and written communication skills
- Preferably with previous work experience in an automotive company
- Willing to work on extended hours

SERVICE TECHNICIANS

- Male, not more than 25 years of age
- Graduate of trade/vocational in Automotive Technology
- Experience in the same capacity gained from an automotive service company an advantage
- Driving skills also an advantage

Interested applicants may apply personally in business attire or send their resume together with their transcript of records and 2x2 colored picture to the Human Resource Department **(attention: Ms. Vinia Deduyo or Ms. Nhoan Daza)** at **Blk. 15 Ford Global City Bldg. Rizal Drive, Crescent Park West, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig.** *(or e-mail at vinia@fordglobalcity.com).*

Rustan Marketing Corporation

Is in immediate need of top caliber individuals...

BRAND MANAGERS

- Female; Between 26-35 years old
- Degree in Business, preferably Marketing or Economics
- With at least two (2) years experience in product management and development of consumer products in a managerial capacity
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must possess a pleasing, aggressive and dynamic personality
- Must be computer literate

MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER

- Female; Between 28 – 35 years old
- AB Graduate, major in Communication Arts, Advertising or Public Relations
- With at least three (3) years experience in public relations and advertising work in a managerial capacity
- Preferably someone with extensive dealing with the press
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must possess a pleasing, aggressive and dynamic personality
- Must be computer literate

CORPORATE SALES MANAGER

- Female; Between 26-35 years old
- Graduate of a four-year business related course
- With at least two (2) years managerial experience in a retail selling environment
- Preferably with experience in distributing consumer products
- Must be creative and with excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must have strong interpersonal skills and the ability to work effectively with a wide range of constituencies in a diverse community
- Must be highly analytical, goal-oriented, and has good decision making and negotiation skills
- Must possess a pleasing, aggressive and dynamic personality
- Must be computer literate

CHIEF ACCOUNTANT

- Between 26-35 years old
- Must be a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)
- Must have at least two (2) years related work experience in a managerial capacity
- Must be proficient in MS office applications (Excel/Word/Powerpoint) and accounting softwares
- Must have strong financial systems background
- Must be proficient in both oral and written communications
- Must possess a pleasing, aggressive and dynamic personality

PRODUCT PLANNING AND CONTROL ASSISTANT

- Female, between 23-30 years old
- Graduate of Economics, Math / Statistics, Industrial Engineering, Marketing Management, or any related course
- With at least one (1) year work experience preferably in the same / related field
- Must have excellent oral and written communication skills
- Must have strong interpersonal skills
- Must have a pleasing, aggressive and dynamic personality
- Must be highly analytical and results oriented
- Must be excellent with numbers / statistical data
- Must be computer literate

QUALIFIED APPLICANTS ARE REQUESTED TO SEND IMMEDIATELY THEIR COMPREHENSIVE RESUMÉ, TRANSCRIPT OF RECORDS AND A RECENT 2X2 PHOTO TO:

Rustan Marketing Corporation
Human Resource Management
(Executive Administration)
Ground Floor Accelerando Bldg.
395 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City
E-mail address: jtgrajo@rgoc.com.ph

(We will reply to qualified applicants only)

We are inviting applicants to join our team and fill in the following positions:

Account Officer (Metro Manila & Cebu City)

- College graduate with a degree in Marketing, Business Administration or any equivalent 4-year course.
- Preferably with Group Insurance experience, both in sales and administration.
- Must be customer service-oriented and with excellent inter-personnel skills.
- Excellent in oral and written communication
- Minimum 1-year driving experience.
- Proficient in Windows/MS Office

Claims Supervisor – Cebu City

- College graduate of any 4-year course
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- With pleasing personality

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AUGUST 6, 2006

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RAGNAROK

BY LEVEL UP GAMES

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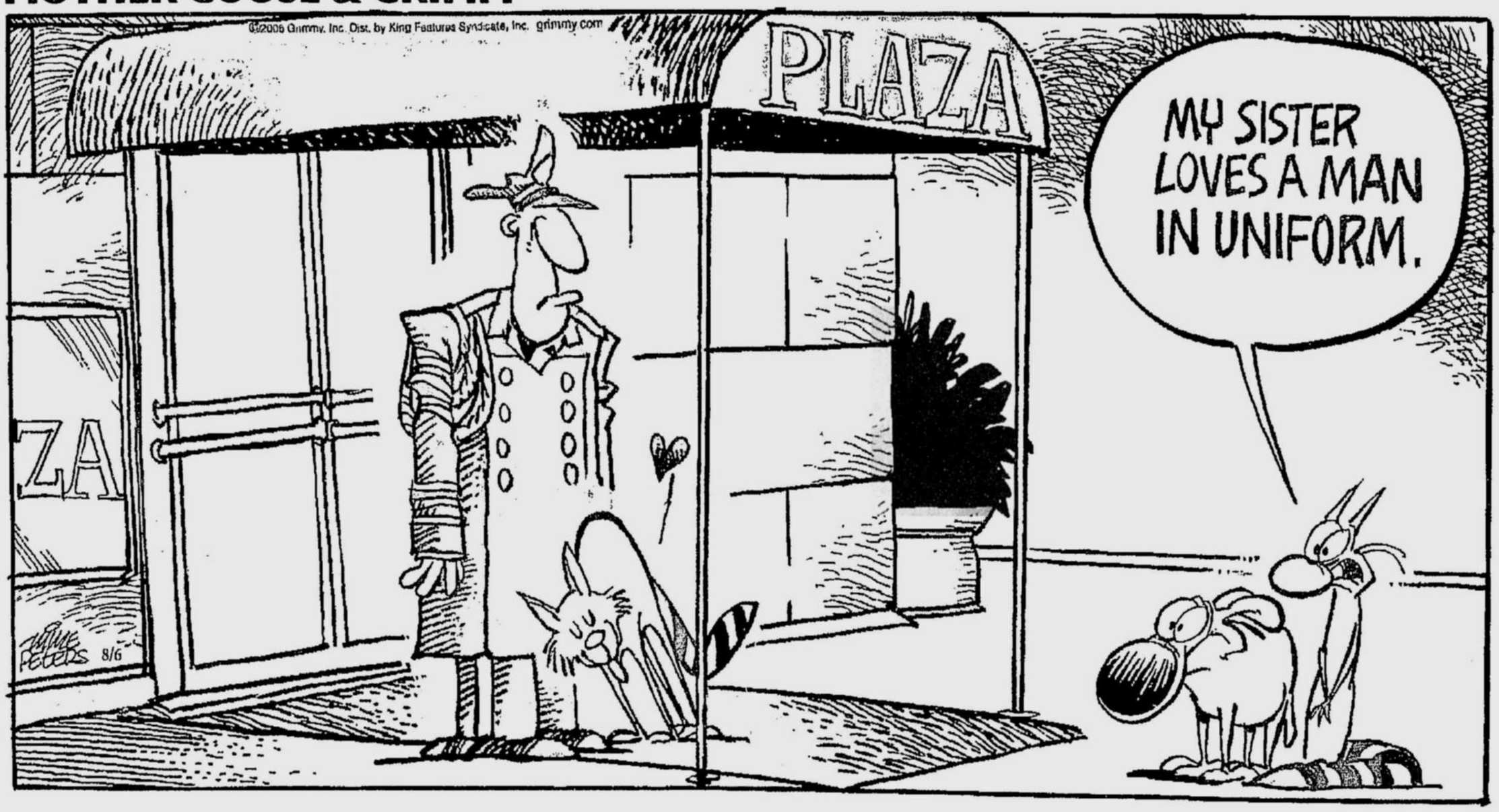
This strip is a repeat of last week's episode as the creators were unable to meet our deadline

PUGAD BABOY

BY POL MEDINA JR.

MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS



ZITS

BY JERRY SCOTT AND JIM BORGMAN

INDAY WANDA

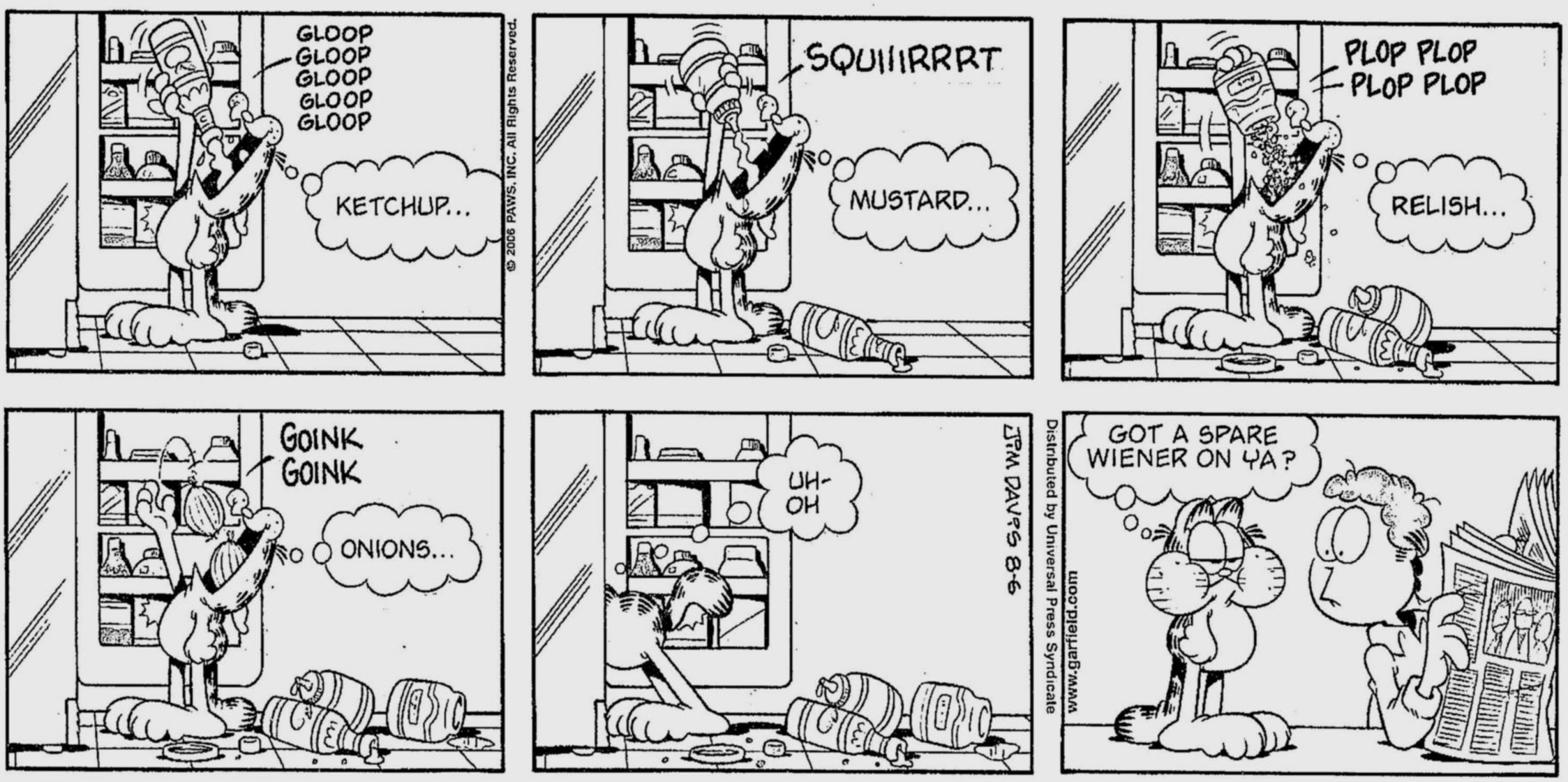
BY BLOG CALIGUIA

LEAVES of GLAZ

BY MANGO COMICS

GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS



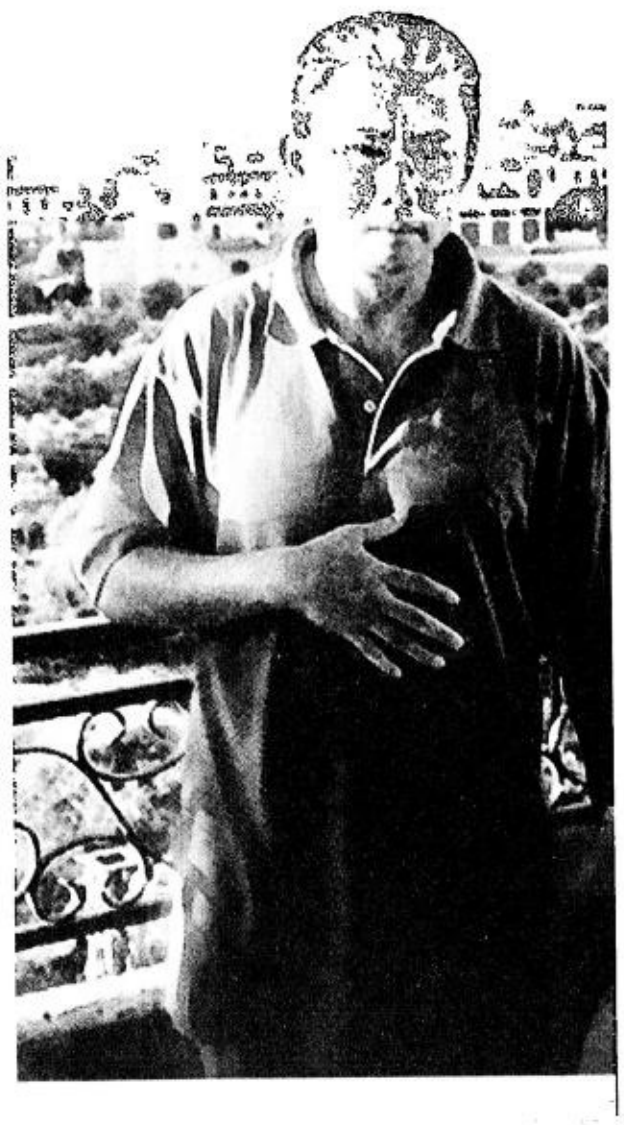
FULL HOUSE

BY STEPH BRAVO

August 6, 2006

INQUIRER

GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE



The stone Church of the Miraculous Medal in West Beirut looms over a broken city as a signpost of hope for Filipino refugees looking for a way out

This priest wants to be the last Filipino out of Beirut

OFWs leave the church compound, their first stop on the long journey home

Amidst the bombings in Lebanon and the OFWs' fear for their lives, the indefatigable Fr. Agustin "Gestie" Advincula has become their shepherd. As determined as he is good-natured, he's not budging until all his countrymen are safe

text and photo illustration
by Lynett A. Villariba

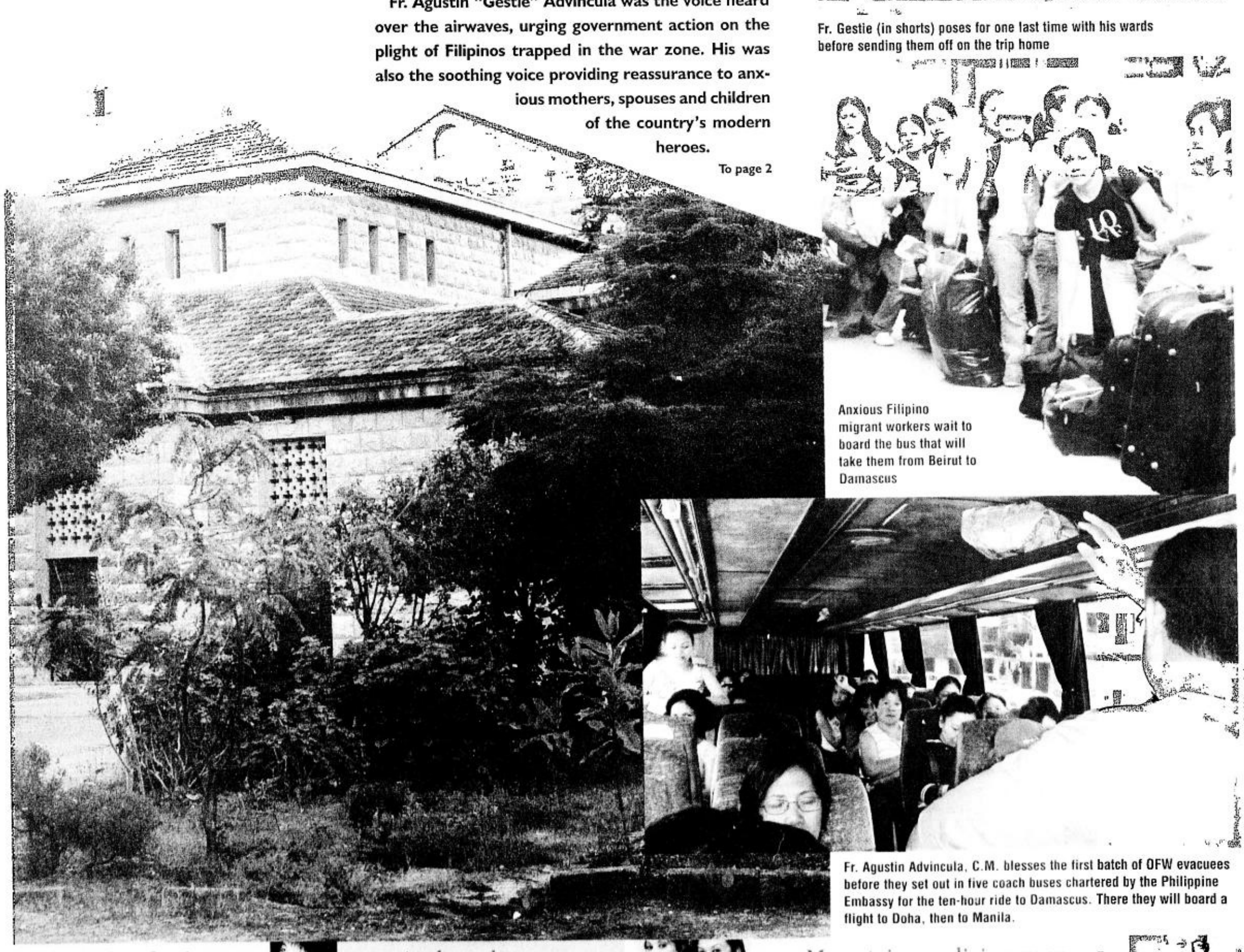
E is otherwise known as the lone Filipino priest in Lebanon, the missionary who provided immediate shelter to thousands of overseas Filipino workers at the outbreak of a bombing war between Israel and the Hezbollah.

Overnight, the Catholic Church of the Miraculous Medal in West Beirut became an emergency evacuation site for a constant stream of fleeing OFWs, part of the 34,000 documented workers in this part of the world.

Fr. Agustin "Gestie" Advincula was the voice heard over the airwaves, urging government action on the plight of Filipinos trapped in the war zone. His was also the soothing voice providing reassurance to anxious mothers, spouses and children of the country's modern heroes.

To page 2

Fr. Gestie (in shorts) poses for one last time with his wards before sending them off on the trip home



Anxious Filipino migrant workers wait to board the bus that will take them from Beirut to Damascus

Photos taken by an evacuee John Paul Nasnidad

Fr. Agustin Advincula, C.M. blesses the first batch of OFW evacuees before they set out in five coach buses chartered by the Philippine Embassy for the ten-hour ride to Damascus. There they will board a flight to Doha, then to Manila.

Video feeder, p.3

Ageless dancers, p.4

Mountain medicine man, p.5

Fr. Agustin ...from page 1

At the outbreak of the war in Beirut, Fr. Gestie saw in the chaos an opportunity to save some runaway Filipino maids, bringing 90 of them to his church for repatriation. They joined the first batch of 250 OFWs who traveled the circuitous route by bus, from Beirut to Damascus, before which Fr. Gestie had scrounged around for donations abroad to provide food for their lodging and for their trip. On July 29, the third week of the conflict, a long distance call found this priest on the road with Philippine Embassy personnel four hours southward of Beirut, trying to convince some Lebanese employers to release their Filipino domestic helpers from their contracts so they could go home. The employers, with whom he has maintained a cordial relationship, would only release the women to a man of the cloth. In the Hezbollah territory of Sidon, the priest's group was able to rescue a Filipino mother married to a Muslim Lebanes and her four children. Another time, Fr. Gestie had to beg off from a phone interview because he had to run off and get more cartons that could be converted into sleeping mats for the expected arrival of more OFWs.

Religious family

Nine years into his Beirut post, this priest, who turns 53 on August 12, remains the scrawny Ilonggo kid who, when he was in Grade Four, told his father he wanted to become a missionary and go to Africa. He was influenced in his decision by his mother, Constancia, who had wanted to be a nun until she met his father Herminio. Fr. Gestie comes from a religious family in Dumalag, Capiz; his sister and a second cousin are nuns, and he's also related to a bishop, a monsignor and a parish priest. He is Father "Tin" to his family, the dutiful son who would have officiated in a cousin's golden wedding anniversary had not the war intervened.

The sixth in a brood of seven that includes an elder sister who is a nun, Fr. Gestie took care of his wayward female wards in Beirut like they were his sisters. Sister Suzanne Advincula of the congregation Daughters of Charity recounts how her younger brother "would ask us (his sisters in Manila and Iloilo) to buy provisions for his mission, from missalettes in Tagalog to women's undergarments by the dozens, which he promised to pay for later.

These would be given to runaway domestic helpers who sought shelter either in his church or in the Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) office in Beirut.

In times of crisis, Fr. Gestie's monicker, "Apeng," would come to the fore. The "keeper of the canteen" during his seminary days was known for his prudence in husbanding limited resources. He ruled with the dictum that translated to "*Di pwedeng mangutang ng hopia o softdrinks o ano pa man ngayon!* (No credit given on food and softdrinks or other items today)"

But the Vincentian priest gave of his time and energy with boundless generosity. Aside from saying Mass in English and Filipino for Filipinos wherever they may be in Lebanon, Fr. Gestie readily converted the Congregation of the Mission into a refugee center for OFWs with the full support of his Lebanese counterparts. Through Filipino Sr. Amelia Torres, the Daughters of Charity, a sister congregation that runs a school nearby, opened eight classrooms to accommodate the swelling number of evacuees. A few meters away, the St. Vincent Lodging House also became an extension evacuation center in close coordination with the Philippine Embassy.

Working with refugees

Fr. Gestie, it seems, is just being true to his vocation. Vincentian priests (also known as Lazarists) have been known for their long history of evangelical work among refugees of war, from the Turkish wars and the French Revolution of the 17th century to the present Middle East conflict. Some 25 years of being a Vincentian priest has definitely prepared Fr. Gestie for this role.

The priest's call to serve in Beirut came in 1995. As the long drawn-out civil war was coming to a close, the Congregation of the Mission running the biggest Catholic church in Lebanon saw the need for a Filipino priest to minister to the social and spiritual needs of Filipino migrant workers, who were increasing in number parallel to the rebuilding of the country.

In his Silver Jubilee homily last November in Quezon City, Fr. Advincula spoke of serving for 10 more years in his mission

When the Lazarist Fathers asked their Vincentian counterparts in Santuario de San Vicente de Paul in Tandang Sora, Quezon City for a candidate, it was not Fr. Agustin Advincula whom they first named.

"Hyphenated" posts

But the Lebanon posting entailed some visa problems that set back the chosen priest's deployment. It was a time when the Philippine government's travel restriction to the war-torn country was stamped all over local passports.

Meanwhile, Fr. Gestie was busy attending to his "hyphenated" posts at Adamson University, multi-tasking in different departments until he left for France for a brief respite from his administrative studies.

When he got back in 1997, the Lebanon mission was waiting for him, because when the Lazarists finally solved the visa puzzle, the original candidate was no longer available.

Fr. Gestie, whom colleagues and former students remember as "a hard-working yet jolly good fellow," seemed cut out for the job. Buoyed by enthusiasm, the Filipino priest headed for his first foreign posting amidst the disparity in culture and religious beliefs.

The Filipino priest arrived in Beirut on December 15, 1997, and has never looked back since. The very next day, he held the first-ever *Simbang Gabi* (dawn Mass) for 15 migrant workers. By Christmas Eve, the number had swelled to a large merry gathering that made the holidays memorable for the homesick Pinoys. They have remained a close-knit community since.

Bringing home a coffin

The migrant workers drew comfort and support from Fr. Gestie, who would think nothing of bringing home a 7-year-old boy entrusted by his mother to their relatives, and later travelling to the remote Ilocos Norte barrio to check on the boy. Not only would he bring an OFW who had died of natural causes home in a coffin, but Fr. Gestie would also mobilize the community and the embassy to pitch in for the trip and for something to help the deceased's family.

When he first came to Beirut, Fr. Gestie admitted to being thrilled about the prospects of being an overseas Filipino worker himself, earning not in Lebanese currency, but—through the goodwill of his countrymen—a place in heaven.

A long-time Vincentian colleague, Fr. Rene Ruelos, C.M. recalls his experience in Lebanon for a month as reliever for Fr. Gestie when the latter came home last November. Fr. Ruelos recounts that part of the demands of being the lone Filipino priest for 30,000 countrymen in Lebanon was reaching out to the Catholic faithful in far-flung areas, including the present southern danger zone, "to bring the Mass where Filipino workers could not go."

When requests came for an English-speaking Catholic priest, he would not hesitate to head for a four-hour journey to Tyre in southern Lebanon to say Mass for Catholic members of the United Nations peacekeeping force.

In search of lost sheep

After the recent bombing of Qana near the borders of Syria and Israel, where scores of civilians were killed, Fr. Gestie and Philippine Ambassador at large Roy Cimatu motored for five hours to the devastated area to ensure that all the Filipinos were safe and evacuated.

Safer in Beirut, the priest would refuse to sit comfortably in church, waiting for the flock to come in. He would go around the city in search of his lost sheep "to deliver Christ's message of love."

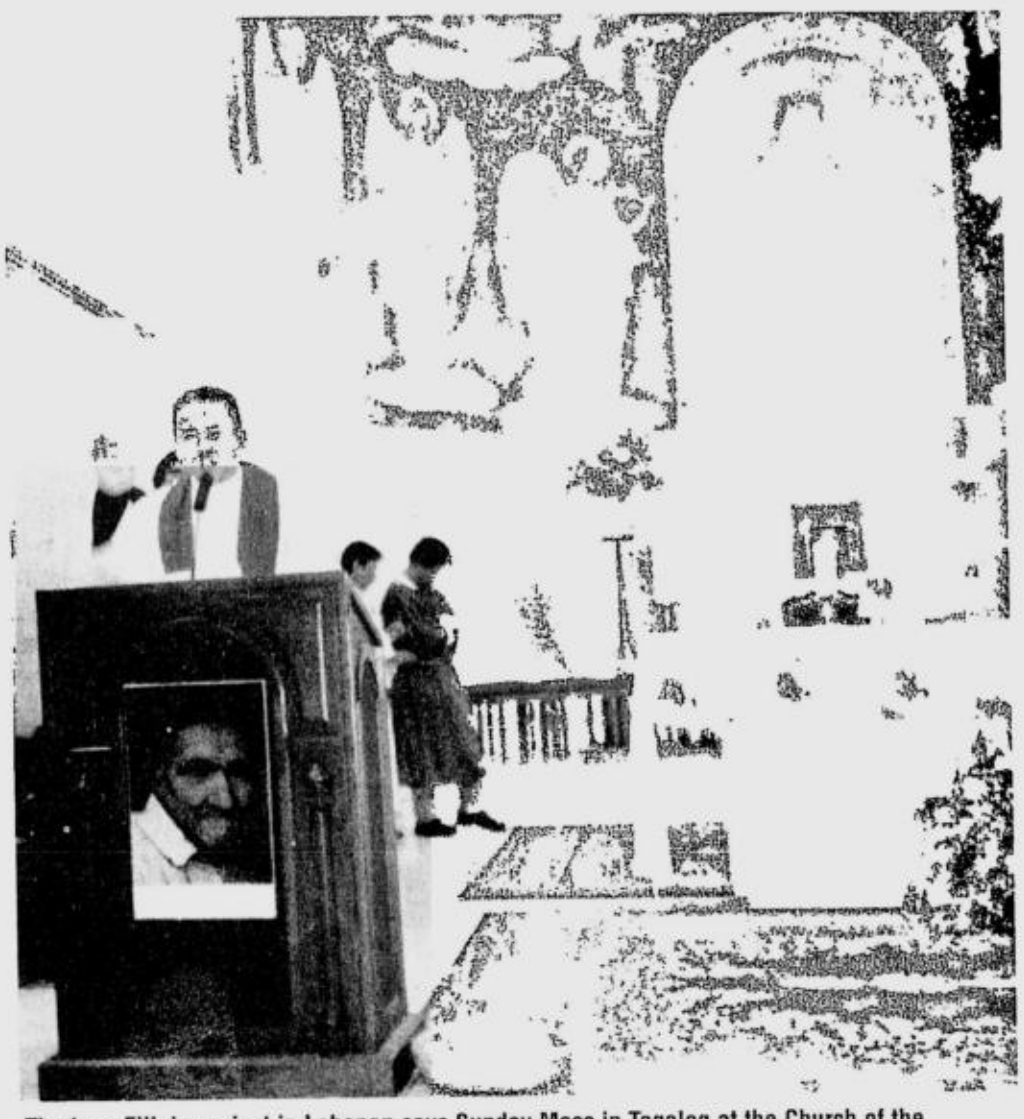
Once, he would use the church of the largest Christian community in Lebanon, known as the Maronites, for a Roman Catholic Mass where otherwise the mass is said in the Coptic language tradition. At another time, the Filipino community would rent a place in the Hamra district to hear his sermon. Or he would go just outside the city to the Catholic church of the Franciscan Friars.

While Fr. Gestie looks forward to coming home and "wearing shorts again," he apparently knows where he is needed most. Pressed for how long he intends to stay in Beiruit, Fr. Gestie retorts, "For as long as my mission is not over. I'm good for another 10 years."

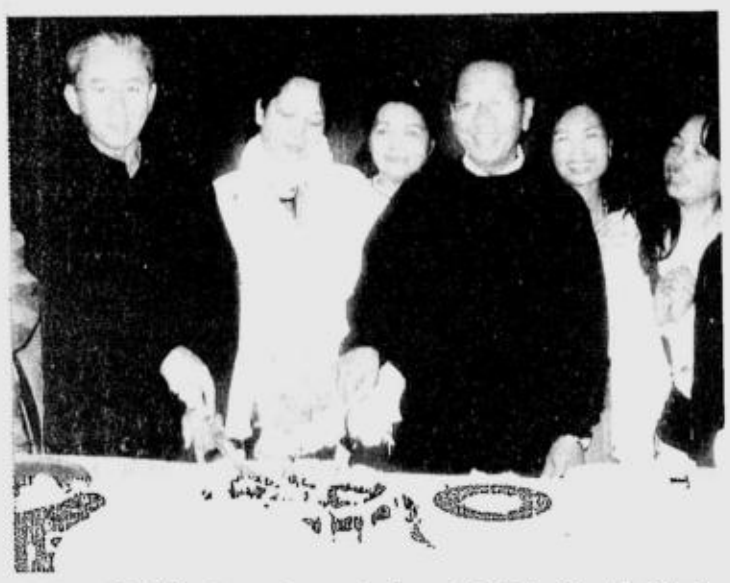
His friend Fr. Ruelos confirms that. "He will stick it out until the last DH is safely repatriated home."

With the uncertainty of war and more conflicts in sight, that could mean digging in for the long haul. But for this Filipino priest, it's the only way to tend to God's flock.

Fr. Advincula's Roman Catholic Congregation of the Mission maintains cordial relations with the Lebanese Christian Maronites under Cardinal Boutros Sfier



The lone Filipino priest in Lebanon says Sunday Mass in Tagalog at the Church of the Miraculous Medal in Beirut with Filipino migrant workers serving as *sacristans*



Fr.Rene (right) hosts a welcome back party in Beirut for his friend Fr. Gestie, who had gone home to celebrate his 25th anniversary in the priesthood in Jaro, Iloilo

Fr. Gestie celebrating Palm Sunday for the Filipino migrant community on the church grounds

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ERRATUM

In the article published in the Sunday INQUIRER Magazine, July 30, titled "For this achiever, it's a woman's world whether in business or advocacy work" (page 3), it was written that Olivia Ferry's daughter Gia underwent a medical procedure which led to a double mastectomy. Ms. Ferry would like to clarify that Gia's condition did not require radical surgery.

Ang Palaka Sa Prinsesa

"I love you, you're perfect, now change"

Hinintay ko ang sandaling ito,
ang pagdating mo.
Tanggapin mo ang tumpok
ng langaw na ikinorte
kong bulaklak,
ibinalot sa tila hamog
na mga patak ng laway
mula sa matalas kong dila.
Lumapit ka,
hagkan mo ako.
At saka ko sasabihin
sa iyo na mahal kita
sa pinakaromantikong
paraang alam ko:

Kokak.

Marlon Hacla

Machete

Sinakmal siya isang gabi ng takot bagamat
Panatag siya, o pinipilit niya, bago matulog.

Iisa ang kaniyang panaginip: Nang kabisaduhin
Niya ang korte ng lalaki habang dinadamitan

Ng dilim. Siya, ng libog. Nililok niyang muli
Sa isip ang lahat ng kurba at ang haba ng kaniyang

Pasensiya bago mabanaag nang tuluyan ang obra.
Sa dibdib ng binata, nagliliok siya ng malaking puso.

Sinubukan niyang ibukas ang palad para haplusin ito.
Hindi niya ito magawa. Nagising siyang basa sa pawis

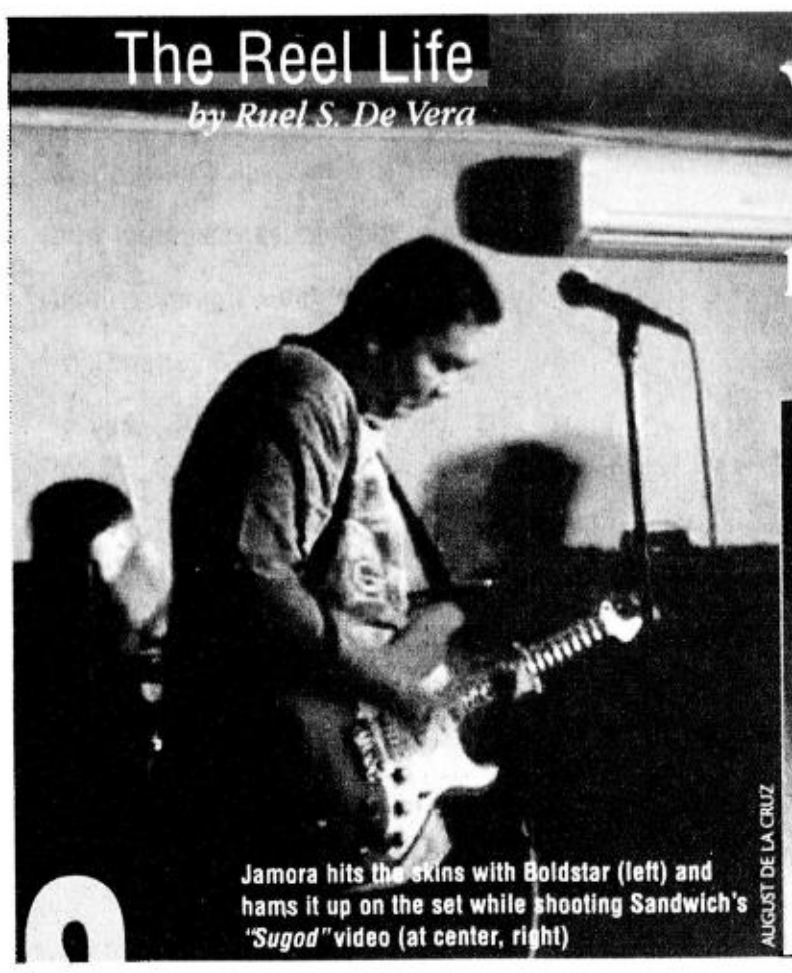
At semilya. At hindi rin niya magawang haplusin
Maging ang sariling puso.

Sonny Corpuz Sendon

The Reel Life

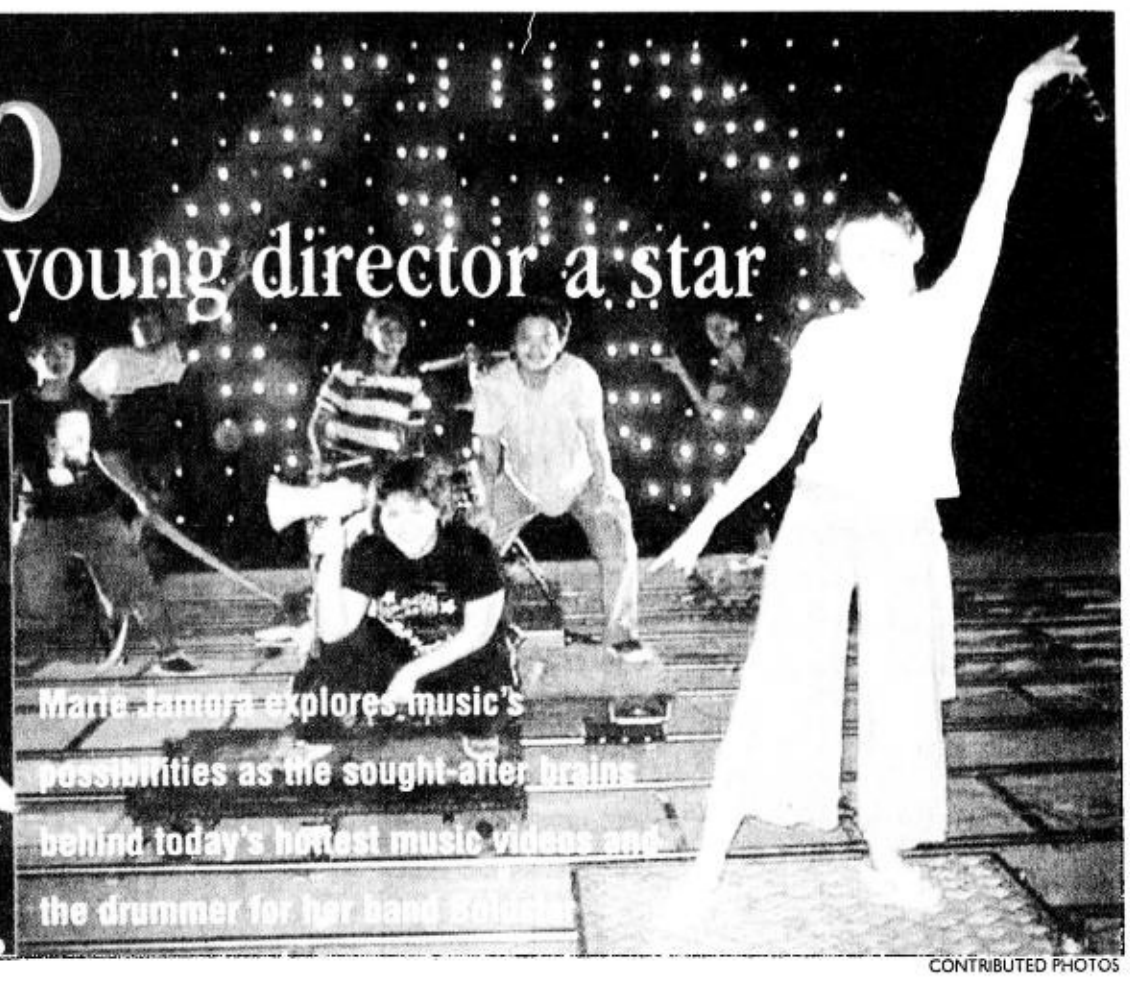
by Ruel S. De Vera

Video made this young director a star



Jamora hits the skins with Boldstar (left) and hams it up on the set while shooting Sandwich's *"Sugod"* video (at center, right)

AUGUST DE LA CRUZ



Marie Jamora explores music's possibilities as the sought-after brains behind today's hottest music videos and the drummer for her band Boldstar

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

PLICE together her face's capacity for betraying whatever she's feeling with her hipster fashion tendencies, and you get the sense that Marie Jamora really is someone who has just stepped out of a TV set into our reality—perhaps a crazy anime character, or a heavily caffeinated puppet from some weirdo children's show. That would, at the very least, explain her seemingly superhuman ability to reshape whatever fabric of reality we perceive on the boob tube.

That's because the 27-year-old Jamora is perhaps the smartest, hottest director of music videos out there. Even as her hypnotic video for Imago's *"Akap"* was recognized as last year's best video at the NU Rock Awards, Jamora's kinetically rousing take on Sandwich's *"Sugod"* is nominated several times over for this month's MTV Pilipinas Awards 2006. Meanwhile, she has a pretty good sideline as the drummer (plus vocals) for the band Boldstar.

Considering that makes her a director-drummer, Jamora can be identified as an iteration of the hyphenate, which is a good thing, since she actually likes hyphens. "I like the hyphen when it's long, especially when it's used almost like an ellipse," she says gamely. "I'm not too fond of the semi-colon, but I won't go as far as to say I dislike it."

Her family background is reason enough to see that Jamora has a most diverse experience growing up. She has doctors for parents—pulmonologist Eduardo Jamora and dermatologist Sylvia Jacinto-Jamora. The youngest in a brood of five, she has an interesting mix of siblings: newspaper editor Therese, restaurateur Gary, dermatologist Jasmin and stage actress Jenny.

Betamax brainwashing

"We loved TV so much, but we weren't allowed to watch during school days. But since my parents were always at work and my siblings were all older than me, they watched TV anyway and we got away with it," she recalls. Add to that the Betamax tapes they rented (or laserdiscs later on) or those recordings of American shows sent home by relatives, and Jamora had an eclectic early viewing experience. Thus, she credits her "early training/brainwashing on TV and movies" to her siblings, whether it be Akira Kurosawa's "Sanjuro" or Steven Spielberg's "E.T."

It was also around that time that Jamora was exposed to music. "My dad used to be a doctor for KLM and we'd get free trips to Europe, so

To page 7

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For a Cause

by Nini Valera
photographs by Jim Guiao Punzalan

New mission: With young Fil-Am singers EJ and Brendon Banares

The Aldeguer Sisters were the country's hottest dance duo of the '70s, respected performers and dance educators who taught their signature head throw to an entire generation. Now based in the US, they're back with a mission

THEY WERE going to dance again.

After a million years, the sister act of Terri and Laly Aldeguer was seen again on local TV last July 27. Taking center stage on the morning talk show "Sis" aired over GMA 7, the sisters bounced energetically, kicked up a typhoon, and rocked the tiny stage where another sister act, Janice and Gelli de Belen, hold court as hosts, along with Carmina Villaroel.

The highlight of the Aldeguers' dance number was a demonstration of their classic head throw—a graceful nod and a quick flip of the head, mouths shaped in perfect O's and white teeth gleaming as they emerge, wavy hair falling back into place.

"We made the sisters (Janice and Gelli) and Carmina do the head throw," Laly says, laughing. "You know, we just figured out our dance steps the night before."

Back in the Philippines for a series of shows and to promote the foundation Pusong Pinoy and two young Fil-Am singers, EJ and Brendon Banares, the Aldeguer sisters have been based in the US since 2000, where they run the Aldeguer Sisters Performing Arts Center in West Covina, California.

Dancing on "Sis" without missing a step or a beat, the "girls," '70s icon of dance and hip, proved they still have a lot of mileage left in them. Arthritis and old age have no place in their lives.

"We're fit, very fit," says Terri, older than sister Laly by 11 months. "We have to keep up with our students."

Trained in classical ballet while growing up in Bacolod, the sisters incorporated jazz and modern dance into their moves when they began performing for family parties as teenage girls.

Latest moves

"Every year, we would go to the States and enroll in dance studios," says Laly. "We would learn the latest dance from masters of modern dance, come back here and perform what we had picked up from there."

They would also bring back the latest fashion from New York—thigh-high patent leather boots, sky-high mini skirts, tight sweaters and flared hipster pants.

Before long, the sisters were spotted by a talent scout for an advertising agency, which was about to launch a television commercial for Tancho Tique, a Japanese brand of pomade and hair lacquer.

"They made us dance in the beginning and end of the commercial," Terri relates. "We danced hula, Tahitian, all sorts of dances, and changed costume for every dance."

The commercial was successful in selling the brand—as well as the Aldeguer sisters. Soon, they were among the most wanted guests on primetime television shows.

"Night Owl Dance Party," "Dance Time with Chito," "Seeing Stars With Joe Quirino," "Ariel Con Tina," "Tony Santos Presents," and the various reincarnations of German Moreno's chopsuey shows, to name a few, were not complete without the bubbly Aldeguer sisters.

"You'll never believe it," gushes Teri in recollection. "We were all over the place. Just one kick of a leg earned us about P10,000."

Product endorsements also came rolling in. "Remember Suave? We did a commercial for them," says Laly. "All we had to do was the head throw."

Kanekalon, a Japanese maker of wigs, also came up with its version of the Aldeguers' floppy hair. "They sold like hotcakes," Laly recalls, giggling, and fluffing her naturally wavy hair.

The decade of the '70s belonged to the dancing girls, who also represented the sexuality of the youth. Ironically, the Aldeguers chose to downplay their sex symbol persona.

"We were never suggestive in our dance," says Terri. "We have this attitude that commands respect. I don't think we were deliberately sexy."

The sisters have never married, even if both have sons, both now 26, and born six months apart.

"I'm married to my sister, Laly," says Terri. "And she's married to me. We felt that we would not have been what we are now if we had gotten married. A man proposing marriage would always tell us that we could continue what we were doing, and that he would stay in the background. But that, I know, would never happen."

The sisters have always stuck to what they believed was right. At the peak of their career, they opposed the showbiz practice of dancing girls as background acts to solo singers.

Walking out

"There was a time when we told producers of shows that we would not dance in if it was not a solo spot," Terri recalls. "They got mad at us, banished us practically, but we felt strongly about this."

The Aldeguer sisters walked out of shows several times after they were told that there was no solo spot for them. That took guts, and a lot of attitude, Terri admits. Laly says that like solo singers, they have also perfected their act, so why should they be in the background? "It was a good fight," she says. "In the end, they took us seriously and gave us our own spots."

They hugged that spot for at least 20 years, until they both got bored with several businesses they put up here and decided to leave for the US on a family vacation. The two eventually settled there on extraordinary talent visas, which the likes of Lea Salonga and the Hotdog band's Dennis Garcia also hold.

The last time the Aldeguer sisters danced before a live audience was about two years ago, when a sponsor of a show they had mounted for their students in the US refused to participate unless the sisters danced, according to Terri. The sisters were then celebrating their 30 years in showbiz with a show at the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel.

Of course, the head throw received the loudest applause.

"We don't really know how that move came about," says Laly, jiggling her body to the song "Doncha" by the Pussycat Dolls.

Like most phenomena, the Aldeguers' head throw came about by an accident of movement. "I guess we did it once and everybody liked it and applauded so we just kept on doing it," recounts Terri.

(The head throw has since evolved into head banging in the early '90s, when kids who have never heard of Terri and Laly smashed their heads against air while dancing to the music of heavy metal bands. But that's a different story.)

The Aldeguer sisters also taught the move to countless teenage students of their dance school in Manila, the Aldeguer Dance Studio, during the '70s.

Following rules

"We had girls from Assumption who came to us to learn how to dance," Laly says. "We also received letters from the nuns of that school. They said we were a bad influence," Terri laughs.

"But we were strict with the girls, whom we brought on all our road shows," adds Laly. "They followed our rules. We never let them play hanky-panky. We were straight. If they wouldn't obey us, they were out."

Loren Legarda, the Marcos sisters, and even President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo were some of the students of the old Aldeguer Dance School, according to Terri.

But to their current crop of students in their school in West Covina, the Aldeguer sisters are just plain teachers.

"It's their parents who know us," Terri explains. "The kids don't know who we are. But their parents, who were born here and grew up here while we were performing on TV, know us very well. They were the ones who encouraged us to put up the school. They said they needed something like this to keep their kids off the streets."

Countless times, a mother would come to the sisters and practically beg them to help shape their child into a better person through theater arts.

"That's where values training comes in," says Terri. "We don't only teach them how to act, sing and dance. We also teach the kids values, how they should be serious about what they're doing and to focus and always give their best."

Performance level

Every show the Aldeguers mount for their students is of performance level.

"The kids perform with professional singers from the Philippines," says Laly. "We would ask people like Joey Albert or Anthony Castelo to perform with the kids. That way, they experience the real thing."

The students have since become part of the sisters' advocacy, Minority Artists for Mainstream America.

"They might not become as big as Lea Salonga," Terri observes candidly, "but they could still become something if they tried hard enough."

While hundreds of students pay money to enroll in the sisters' school, there are children whose parents cannot come up with the tuition fee. Often, these are children of a cash-strapped single mother. "That's when we offer scholarships if the child is exceptionally talented," says Lally. It's about giving back to society, Terri seconds.

Very few people know, Laly confides, that the Aldeguer sisters have always given a percentage of their earnings to charity.

A few weeks ago, the sisters distributed a hundred grocery bags to indigent families who came to one of the mall shows of the Banares brothers.

"It's so sad," Terri observes. "We were only ready for a hundred recipients, but hundreds more were needy for food."

Through the Pusong Pinoy foundation, the Aldeguer sisters carry on their mission of bringing hope to marginalized Filipino families, who might never have the chance to emerge from poverty.

Dance with charity

"The idea of Pusong Pinoy actually started with the Banares brothers," Terri says. "They said they wanted to help Filipino kids who are needy. We were touched by this thought and made moves to make this happen."

Touching base with Fil-Am families in California, the Aldeguer sisters threw a fund-raising party to raise money for the foundation.

"To most families there, the cost of an artificial limb for a girl living in Tondo is equivalent to the cost of a birthday party," Laly says. "I've come across parents and their children who decide to do away with a party and give the money to the foundation instead."

While here in Manila, the sisters will look for recipients to be matched with Fil-Am donors.

"It could be an operation, a wheelchair, or whatever is needed most," says Terri. "But everything must be documented. We need pictures and doctors' certificates to show the donors where their money will go."

The sisters are even willing to dance for the money.

"At least we can still dance," says Terri. "There's this little girl in Tondo who has never walked in her life. She cried when we fitted her with an artificial leg."

This, the Aldeguer sisters say, is an even bigger high than dancing up a storm. Q

For more information on Pusong Pinoy, e-mail pusongpinoy@yahoo.com

This legendary sister act has another reason to keep *Dancing*

They got the moves: Laly and Terri today; inset above, in full regalia for a performance in the '70s

Adventurers

by Alya B. Honasan

For Dr. Ted Esguerra, multi-talented medic of the Everest team, climbing the world's highest peak will be just another way to catch a glimpse of the divine, alongside other passions such as writing songs and painting pictures

The mountain doctor with the heart of an artist

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

OR climbers Leo Oracion and Pastor Emata, the first Filipinos to reach the summit of Mount Everest last May, coming down in one piece and in good health, with nothing more than sunburn to worry about, may have been as great an accomplishment as reaching the top of the world's highest peak. And other than their own abilities, they have team doctor Dr. Teofredo "Ted" T. Esguerra to thank for that.

"It was my friend, a Tibetan monk, who gave me good advice," recounts the 39-year-old Esguerra of his strategy for keeping the members of the team in fighting form. "He told me, if you want to understand our culture and our constitution, look at our environment." That's why, other than regularly monitoring such vital signs as the climbers' blood pressure, cardiac rate, pulse oxymetry (how oxygen is absorbed by the body, a variable used in intensive care), body temperature and respiratory rate, Esguerra got them on a Tibetan diet that was 70 to 75 percent carbohydrates. He also had them eating more *dhal* (lentils) instead of meat ("So you don't tax the liver any more") for their protein requirements, and combined this with herbal supplements like rhodiola, gingko and green tea to increase oxygenation of the brain and excretion of water, the build-up of which could lead to fatal swelling of the lungs or brain at high altitudes.

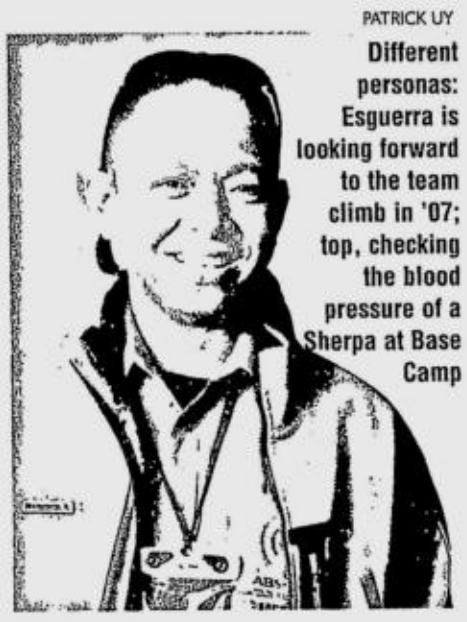
Team safety

Thus, Esguerra, who has had extensive international training in Wilderness Emergency Medical Services or WEMS (of which altitude medicine is only one aspect), was faced with the responsibility of keeping his team members safe while making sure he himself stayed on the job. On top of that, the Philippine tent inevitably became one of the most popular places in the small community that is Everest's Base Camp, mainly because of the Pinoys' natural sociability, and also because Esguerra became known as the good doctor who would readily treat anybody who needed help.

"One day we even helped this Indonesian woman, who was almost 50-50," Esguerra recounts. "It messed up our training program for that day, but this was a matter of life and death; you can't turn your back on that. Later we heard she was okay, back in Indonesia and training people in rescue, too." It's news like this, and moments such as the time a Sherpa boy sought out the Filipino doctor to thank him for "taking care of my people," that kept Esguerra going despite his job being "toxic," he admits with a laugh.

It was this gung-ho attitude, Esguerra believes, that also held the team together while facing the physical challenge in a completely alien natural environment. Even during their early days of training—first at the renowned Western Himalayan Mountaineering Institute in Manali, India in 2004, in New Zealand, and on Mt. Muztagh Ata on the border of China and Pakistan—Esguerra recalls how their foreign instructors would marvel at the Pinoy's hardiness. "You know us, *masayahin* (happy)," he says. "Even if it was our first exposure to Himalayan climbing, and even if Filipinos really aren't mentioned in the history of world mountaineering, we were game. That's why we didn't have a difficult time."

PATRICK UY



Different personas: Esguerra is looking forward to the team climb in '07; top, checking the blood pressure of a Sherpa at Base Camp

Even the adjustment to altitude mountain sickness (AMS) didn't turn out to be a major problem. "You just have to get acclimatized in preparation for the 29,035-foot climb to Everest, and that means walking up, slowly. Let your body experience it, then go down. Challenge your body to reach a greater oxygen-carrying capacity. But, of course, the first requirement is that you should be fit."

First love

In fitness, attitude, and skill, the team couldn't have found a better point man.

Ironically, medicine was not Esguerra's first love. Born in Bansalan, Davao del Sur, the elder of two children, it was his father Felizardo, a farmer, and mother Epifania, a housewife, who wanted him to take up medicine. "I wanted to become a journalist or an artist," Esguerra admits, and he never lost that affinity; through the years he has managed to paint, perform, learn to play ethnic instruments, write songs, score theater productions and write poetry on the side!

He studied medical technology in Davao and was in his second year of medicine proper when he lost his scholarship, and ended up leaving home to seek his fortune in Manila. He teamed up with other musicians and eventually found himself in Bicol, playing gigs, teaching and writing for a local newspaper, but spending most of his time as a visual artist, exhibiting in Legaspi City and representing the region in national events.

Thus, when his mother was stricken with breast cancer and asked her son to finish his medical studies as a dying wish, the connections he made in the art scene made it possible for Esguerra to return to medical school on scholarship. He graduated from the Bicol Christian College of Medicine in 1994. But Epifania would not live to see her son graduate. Felizardo would live to see his son prepare for the climb of his life, but he passed away last year, while Esguerra was scaling Muztagh Ata.

True vocation

Esguerra did learn to love his vocation—"*Kung mabasa ka, eh di maligo ka na* (If you get wet, might as well take a bath)," he quips—but he admittedly prefers bloodier emergency situations, literally and figuratively, to routine medical check-ups. He had been climbing mountains since he was in his 20s, although Esguerra says it was less as an athlete and more as an artist.

"I grew up with Mount Apo in my backyard," he says. "I would immerse myself in the culture of mountain people and take photographs of things I could paint or sculpt," he recalls. The rescue training proved instrumental, however, in landing him a job as an ambulance doctor at a UK-US Air Force base on the border of Yemen and Saudi Arabia, where he was rigorously trained for another three years.

Back home in Manila, in the interim, the musician wrote an anti-war song—and landed a four-month study and travel grant to the University of Victoria in Canada. It was only upon his return in 2003 that, referred by a doctor friend, he joined the Philippine Coast Guard, where he is now a Lieutenant (Senior Grade) in the Coast Guard Medical Service and one of the country's leading practitioners in the field of search and rescue and disaster management.

It was this stellar resumé that got Esguerra invited by First Philippine Mount Everest Expedition Team Leader and former Transportation and Communciation Undersecretary Art Valdez. "We were initially 35 recruits, but it's the physical fitness that's required of you—*laglagan talaga ang iba* (others really drop out)," Esguerra says. "We did climbs of some unmapped peaks in the Cordilleras as part of our training. We bike from Manila to Subic, do regular 10-kilometer runs."

On his own, Esguerra is also into tennis, mountain biking and martial arts. Just about the only thing that must have kept the doctor from doing the climb last May with his two team members, one suspects, was the fee involved. "That would have meant 10,000 bloody US dollars," he says with a laugh. Esguerra was at 18,000 feet and monitoring both Oracion and Emata every minute of their successful summit.

Music on the mountains

Among his bags of medical equipment, Esguerra also carried with him to Base Camp a Jew's harp (*kubing*) and a flute given to him by a Tibetan friend, and with these he would make music on the snow-covered mountainsides. "They're all connected," he says of his many personas, whether it be as climber, doctor, artist, or musician. "I go on a rescue mission, and there are things that strike me which I must write down and paint a picture of at the end of the day. It's all part of who I am."

Born a Muslim, Esguerra took his faith more seriously only when he was working in Saudi Arabia, inspired by the zeal of some fellow musicians who converted to Islam. He maintains a harmonious relationship among his three wives and six children, among whom he divides his time, but his main source of inspiration is his faith, Esguerra says. "In Islam, a *jihad* doesn't just refer to a holy war. It is anything you do for righteousness. For me, to be able to climb Everest for the glory of my country is a righteous thing."

The entire 17-man team's assault on Everest is set for early 2007, and Esguerra is particularly excited about making sure his three female colleagues, Karina Davondon, Janet Belarmino and Noelle Wenceslao, make the climb alongside them. "We want them to be the first Filipinas on Everest. Well, if I make it, I'll be the first Southeast Asian doctor. It will be an expedition of firsts."

The Everest fever has spilled over to Esguerra's other passions; he and three other painters are planning an exhibit titled "*Kaya ng Pinoy*," the expedition's mantra, for November. He has written a song, "*Kaya ng Pilipino*," which he is waiting to record with his band, Tanglaw Sining, and it's dominated by Esguerra's clear vocals and the haunting sound of the *kubing*. For Dr. Ted Esguerra, multi-tasking mountain medic with the soul of an artist, everything just comes together.

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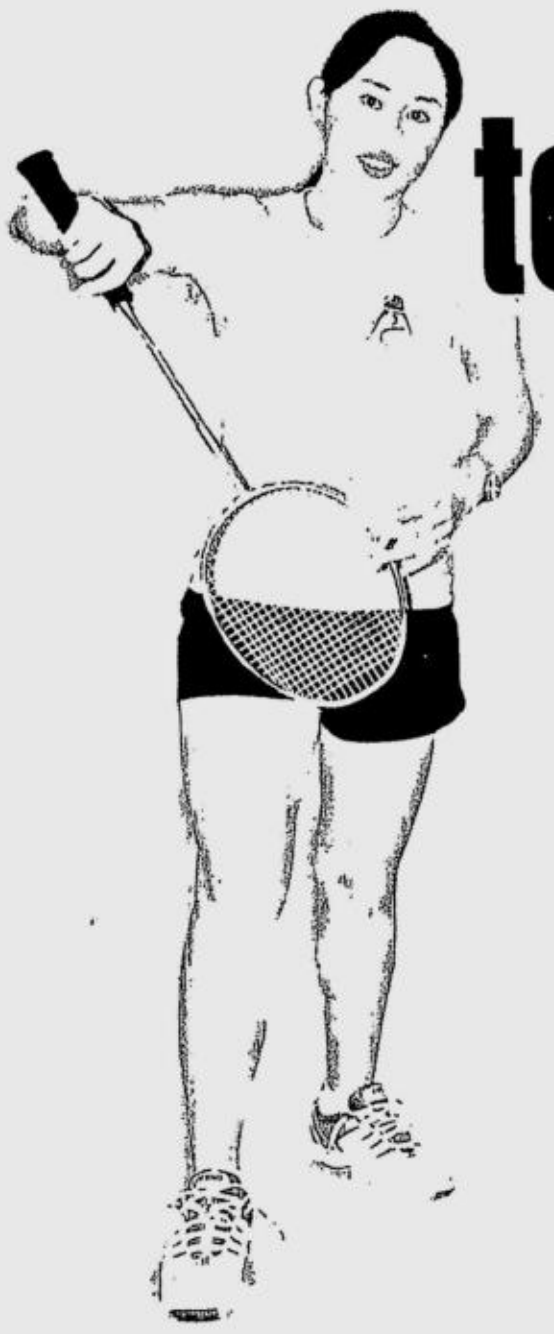


This top-ranked shuttler is an aspiring legal eagle

Irene Chiu overcame a career-threatening injury to keep playing badminton at a high level. Now she faces the challenge of balancing elite play with her demanding law school schedule

NE can forgive Irene Chiu for rescheduling an appointment for an interview. After all, she just went through one crazy week with little rest, causing her body to break down and get sick.

The 22-year-old had just played in three championship matches, one after the other, at the recent JVC Open Badminton Championships at the Glorietta Activity Center. Although she failed to win in the mixed doubles and ladies doubles finals, respectively, Chiu managed to annex the ladies singles crown, thus solidifying her status as the number one ranked female singles player in the country.

She could have easily partied the night away to celebrate her victory, but there was little or no time to do so, as Chiu had to study and prepare for classes as a freshman at the Ateneo Law School.

"I usually wake up at six then study until 11 a.m. before going to class from 12 to 5 p.m., then I train from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., go home then study from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Maybe that's why I got sick because I only got to sleep for five hours. I'll probably add one more hour of sleep from now on," jokes Chiu.

Following a demanding schedule is nothing new for Chiu, as she's been juggling sports and studies since she was young. The second of two children of businessman Bing Chiu and his wife Nina, Irene started formal training for badminton at age 10. Irene would start off each weekday training at home with Nina, then head off to school at Angelicum before practicing in the afternoon at Camp Crame.

National dream

Her hard work and dedication paid off as she started regularly topping the singles and doubles events at the National Juniors, and soon enough people were advising her to try out for the National Team.

"I didn't know that I had what it took to be on the National Team. People were telling me to try joining the (National) Open even if I was just 13," Chiu recalls. She did try out and proved her worth as she reached the quarterfinals of the ladies singles and made the National Team after finishing in the top six.

Being part of the National Team, it would have been understandable for Irene to compromise her school work. After all, she now had to go all the way to Rizal Memorial from Quezon City nearly every day after school in order to train.

However, it was just the opposite, as she was even more driven to do well in school. She graduated valedictorian in high school. "Time management," remarks Chiu when asked how she was able to excel both on the courts and in the classroom. "She knows what she wants and she'll work hard for it," shares doubles partner and good friend Vanessa Tanco.

Everything was turning out brilliantly for Irene until she was about to face her toughest opponent yet.

Representing the Philippines in the 2001 Arafura Games in Australia, Chiu was competing in a doubles event when she got into a freak accident. "I jumped from the middle, went sideways then backwards and landed on one leg, lost my balance, and my knee twisted and buckled," recalls Chiu.

"I said 'uh-oh,' and I couldn't get up. I had a high tolerance for pain, but when my partner started showing pity for me, that's when I started to cry. I realized how serious it was, and it just dawned upon me that all my training would go to waste, and my career would just stop. I was crying that whole week in Australia."

Just as she had feared, Chiu tore her anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), and her budding badminton career seemed to be in limbo. Her knee got operated on back in Manila, but she would be sidelined for a year, and was eventually stricken off the National Team roster.

"I went through all the stages—trauma, denial, grief and getting over the psychological barrier," shares Chiu. Since the injury occurred the summer before she entered college, Chiu also initially faced the uncertainty of having her scholarship offer revoked. Nevertheless, her fears were allayed.

"The people at Ateneo were good enough to still award me a scholarship, even if they knew I couldn't play that whole year," says Chiu, who earned a Legal Management degree.

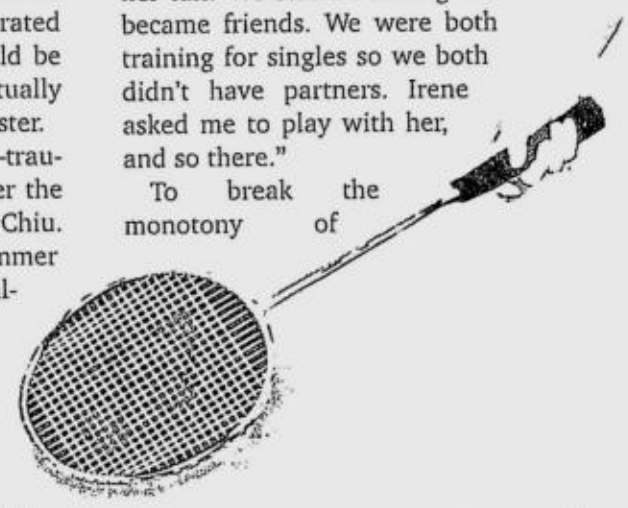
Topping tournament

Two years later, Chiu would repay her school's trust and confidence, as she bounced back from her career-threatening setback to lead Ateneo to the UAAP women's badminton title in 2003. Proving that she was fully recovered, Chiu earned the Most Valuable Player (MVP) award of the same tournament.

After graduating from college, Chiu delayed her entry to law school, as she earned back her place in the National Team and prepared for the 2005 Southeast Asian Games, which the Philippines hosted. "It was really a commitment. I really wanted to get better. That was the time when it was just eat, sleep, train, badminton," says Chiu.

It was during the grueling training sessions that Chiu also developed her friendship and partnership with Tanco. "When we started training for the SEA Games, we weren't really close at all. We just saw each other in competitions, and we played against each other a lot," says Tanco.

"It was so hot in Club 650, where our team trained, because we started training in the middle of summer. Irene was the only one smart enough to bring a fan, so being smart myself, I'd sit beside her because of her fan! We started talking and became friends. We were both training for singles so we both didn't have partners. Irene asked me to play with her, and so there."



To break the monotony of training for the SEA Games, Tanco and Chiu also hung out during the breaks. "We used to go shopping and eat buffets in between training sessions while everyone else went home to rest. We'd be so sleepy during our afternoon training sessions," recalls Tanco. "That was crazy," remarks Chiu.

Chiu and Tanco managed to win their opening doubles match in the SEA Games, becoming the only Filipino tandem to claim a victory in the badminton event, but the celebration would be short-lived, as they eventually fell short of capturing a medal.

"We really wanted a medal so bad, but we went up against the eventual champion during the next match," explains Chiu.

Elite experience

With the SEA Games experience behind her, Chiu shifted her sights to local tournaments like the Philippine Open and the JVC Open, and to preparing for her first year of law school.

Chiu still dreams about playing in other elite international tournaments like the Asian Games, the Olympics and the World Badminton Championships, but she remains realistic. "I'm practical. You can only get better as much as other people are willing to help, and if you're not able to get the support that you need, nothing will happen," she laments. "Even if I have my dreams in badminton, I also have something that I want for myself besides being a badminton player."

One can say that she doesn't only have a mean forehand, but foresight, as well. "People ask me: 'You have your world in badminton, so why do you want to become a lawyer?' I tell them: 'I want to become something more, not just a badminton player,'" stresses Chiu.

With her schedule already packed, Chiu still finds time to help out with RCT Academy, a badminton academy based in The Zone in Makati, which she recently co-founded with Tanco and her coach Renato Reyes.

"Coach (Reyes) is really responsible for the program in the academy. It's open for everyone from kids to adults, even corporate groups. Our vision is to produce world-class athletes," says Chiu. "I've been teaching kids during the past summers and I realized that in order for the kids to improve, the program has to be year-round, so Vanessa and I talked about it and we set up the academy."

In the meantime, Chiu is busy preparing for her mid-terms as she aspires to make the transition from the badminton court to the legal court, a challenge she readily takes on like a shuttlecock heading towards her direction.

"If you have a goal, you work hard for it. You know how much commitment and effort you want to put into reaching your goal." Q

RCT Academy is offering training packages at The Zone, Makati City. For inquiries you may call or text 0922-9284999 or e-mail rctbadminton@gmail.com. You may also visit www.rctbadminton.com Photographed at Speedcourts, Valle Verde 1, Pasig City (tel. no. 914-0808)

Fashionably sporty: Irene dresses up for life beyond the game

Video
...from page 3

Therese and Gary used to buy records all over the world," she remembers; she listened to a lot of new wave back then. It was when Jamora attended the International School Manila that she began to develop a taste all her own, loving The Cure's "Wish," Nirvana's "Nevermind" and even Metallica's "Black Album."

Two of her sisters were part of bands during their college years, and Jamora would watch them jam in their basement—which, it has to be said, is so very indie. Therese played the drums, and Jamora fell hard for the instrument, even asking her mother for a drum set for her 18th birthday instead of a debut (she got the drum set). After writing an article about the Eraserheads, the E-head's Raimund Marasigan helped her tune her drums and taught her some exercises. In due time, she became friends with two members of The Itchyworms, who were looking to form a band on the side. Jamora became the drummer for that side project, dubbed Dexter Calliope and the Tito Gil Twins.

Music zone

Jamora then became part of a band called Wookie Spooky ("or Spooky Wookie, depending on our mood," she says) where, this time, Jamora played bass. As bands often evolve, Jamora jumped back to the drum set, and thus Boldstar was born. Jamora enjoyed working on their debut album, and they did everything on their own, down to the album design; ex-Eraserheads Marasigan and Buddy Zabala produced the album, dubbed "You Must Have Been a Beautiful Something. What Are You…Really?" Believe it or not, she has a side band as well, the intriguingly named Blast Ople.

Jamora's been zoning out on music videos since childhood, first watching the aforementioned Betamax recordings of MTV USA. "I just watched music videos as much as I watched cartoons as a kid," she says. In particular, she was awed by videos from the 1980s, such as Duran Duran's. "They were all like mini-movies," she explains. "Now I don't think a lot of people treat music videos the way they were treated in the '80s." She looks up to the crack practitioners of music video in the Philippines, people like RA Rivera, Quark Henares, and Toppel Lee, among others.

She got deeper into production work, eventually graduating from the Ateneo in 2001 with a degree in communication, cum laude. Her love for film propelled her to continue work in short film, culminating in her gaining an MFA in film from Columbia University. Her short film "Quezon City," starring Jeffrey Quizon, Julia Clarete and Jaime Fabregas, was screened in festivals in New York, Singapore and Cinemanila, among others. But having had her fill of the short life, she now has longer term goals in mind, literally. "I have basically sworn off short films for the rest of my life," Jamora says, due to the format and limitations of the format. "I inherently prefer music videos because there are endless possibilities for it."

And she has taken to those possibilities with vigor. In 2001, she directed the Itchyworm's *"Antipara"* video and Sandwich's "Food for the Soul." Her arrival also coincided with the widespread acceptance of the music video as an integral part of Pinoy music, heavily due to the rise of both the Philippine MTV and MYX channels. Jamora has taken full measure of the form, directing videos for acts such as Sponge Cola, Mayonnaise, Kjwan, the Eraserheads, Urbandub, Dicta License and even Gary V.

Prolific output

The difficulty in crafting a memorable music video is manifold. First, there are more videos out there now than at any time. Second, it is an unwritten but oft-followed rule that every song positioned to attack the charts must have a music video. It isn't just Jamora's prolific output that impresses. It's the fact that she can bend a video to perfectly fit the band or act its features, but also that she manages to make each of her creations different.

Still, working on videos can be a grind, what with the strange and constantly shifting hours. "I don't do more than two music videos a month and I need at least nine hours of sleep a night or else I'm cranky as hell," she says. "I can pull all-nighters for my shoots but I need days where I can be in a coma and I can veg out the next day."

Jamora has recently also become an in-house director for Unitel Productions, allowing her the chance to helm TV commercials. Along those lines, Jamora continues to nurture her plan to do a full-length film. "My ultimate dream is to make movies the way Stanley Kubrick makes movies," she notes. She's looking at some experience, perhaps by producing a film school classmate's thesis film, to be shot here in Manila. Making full-length films is a dream she's chasing. "I want to make one in two years," she adds. "I want to spend one year writing the film and one year in pre-production. I want to do it right."

It's a busy, busy, busy grind for her, but she decompresses by immersing herself in podcasts and DVDs of shows like "Arrested Development" and "The Adventures of Pete & Pete." There is, to be expected, a lot of TV ("Lost," "Veronica Mars") and playtime with niece Isobel who, fittingly, is named after the Bjork song. Seeing as how she's so into the visual and the aural, one wonders if Jamora could have been anything else. And indeed, she says she could have been a chef. "I like cooking and it fascinates me," she admits.

Coming soon

But for now the director's chair and the drum set beckon. Coming soon on a music channel near you are Jamora's newest videos: Bamboo's "Peace Man" and Imago's "Taralets." Boldstar has a track (*"Kumot Unan"*) in the forthcoming APO Hiking Society tribute album, *"Kami nAPO Muna."*

And there are more music videos to be made. Some of this, one can assume, is because of old contacts turned gold: "I'm fortunate to know the people I have known in college because all my friends who had bands then now need music videos for those same bands." Yet a lot of that can also be the unique yet elusive touch that Jamora leaves on her work. Perhaps it's that confluence of all these influences that makes Jamora a wellspring of creativity on so many fronts. Anyone having a casual conversation with Jamora will notice that she seems to be constantly bursting with words, ideas and images. Marie Jamora is still at it, blowing minds, one video at a time.

Pinoy Nga!
by Jess Abrera

Mangkukulam

SUDOKU

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

7	5			4				
						6		1
	2				3	5	7	
1		5			6			
			9			2		8
	6	8	4				5	
5		3						
				9			8	3

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

8/06

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Answer to previous puzzle

9	3	2	7	1	4	6	5	8
1	4	7	5	6	8	9	2	3
8	6	5	9	3	2	7	4	1
4	7	6	2	9	3	8	1	5
2	5	8	6	7	1	4	3	9
3	1	9	8	4	5	2	6	7
5	9	4	1	2	7	3	8	6
7	8	3	4	5	6	1	9	2
6	2	1	3	8	9	5	7	4

Difficulty Level ★★★★

Philippine Daily INQUIRER TV GUIDE
Sunday, August 6, 2006

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Channel			3:30PM																11:30PM
ABC 5		Ringside TV		PBA						Teka Mona		Philippine Idol			Shall We Dance		Aawitan Kita		
ABS-CBN 2	Your Song: Ang Soundtrack Ng Lovelife Mo	Lovespell		The Buzz				TV Patrol World	Goin' Bulilit		Rated K		Sharon		U Can Dance				
AXN														CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)					
Cartoon Network	Hi Hi Puffy AmiYumi	The Road Runner Show	Tom & Jerry Show	Pet Alien/Planet Sketch/Camp Lazlo/Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		Grim Adventures Of Billy&Mandy/Cow & Chicken/Pet Alien/Camp Lazlo		The Simpsons/Robotboy		Megas XLR	Courage The Cowardly Dog		The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy		The Batman	Power Rangers Dino Thunder	Gundam Seed		Aqua Teen Hunger Force/Sealab 2021
Cinema One				So Happy Together				All My Life				Don Quixote				Bukas Na Lang Kita Mamahalin			
Cinemax	For Better Or Worse (2:35PM)			Implanted (4:05PM)			The Snow Walker				Pterodactyl			Battlestar Galactica Mission 8			Van Helsing (10:35PM)		
CNN		World News		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	World News		World News	World Sport	Talk Asia		World News	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Late Edition Live	
Disney Channel	Lizzie McGuire/Art Attack/Buddy	Totally Spies-Double Episodes	Phil Of The Future	Brandy & Mr. Whiskers	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Buzz on Maggie	Phil Of The Future/Emperor's New School	The Suite Life Of Zack & Cody	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			High School Musical/TE Special/Mr. Bean	Mr. Bean/America's Funniest Home Videos	Kim Possible	Martin Mystery	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN		X Games 11 - Day4 Part1				Extreme Programming Sports Max 2006/07		LPGA Golf McDonalds LPGA C'ship				Motorsport Asia	Major League Baseball Saturday						Table Tennis '05 Killerspin
ETC		Saturday Night Live		Insider Weekend	Rated Oh! 5	American Dreams 2		One Tree Hill 3		America's Next Top Model 5		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		Project Runaway 2		Nip/ Tuck 3		Rated Oh!	Insider Weekend
ETC 2nd Avenue		Blow Out 2		Today Show - 1 Hour - Version		Dateline		Cold Turkey 2		NBC Nightly News	WSJR	Nanny 911		The Director		West Wing		NBC Nightly News	Hollywood One On One
EWTN	Defending Life	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	The Donut Man	Adventures In Odyssey	Rosary With Mother Angelica	Octavia Dies	Rome Reports	EWTN Global Showcase		Onward Pilgrims	Images of Mary	Sunday Mass Live			The World Over Encore		Life Is Worth Living	The Abundant Life	
Fox News	Fox News Watch	Fox Report Saturday		Heartland With John Kasich		Big Story Weekend Edition		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Fox & Friends Sunday						Fox News Live			
GMA 7	Gigsters	Love To Love		S-Files				Mahiwagang Baul		Pinoy Meets World		Mel & Joey		All Star K		Daddy Di Do Du		Sunday Night Box Office	
Hallmark Channel		Defending Our Kids: The Julie Posey Story				The Great Mom Swap (5:15PM)				Just Cause		The 10th Kingdom		Dinotopia: The Temptation			Thicker Than Water (10:35PM)		
HBO	Entourage 04/ Date Night	True Believer				Problem Child			Major Payne (6:25PM)			Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban				The Punisher (10:15PM)			
Hero TV	Machine Robo-Rescue	Dear Boys	GPX Cyber Formula	Baki The Grappler	Zenki	Super Yoyo	Ragnarok	Musumet	The Slayers	Barom One	Babel II	Mars The Terminator	Hero TV Thaimax	Dragons	Fire & Ice	Machine Robo-Rescue	Dear Boys	Zenki	Baki The Grappler
IBC 13		Ano Bang Hanap Mo?		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network		Home Shopping Network		My Final Say On Cha-Cha		Pinoy Action Hits				Iyo Ang Katarungan	EL SHADDAI		
JackTV	Everybody Hates Chris	Arrested Development	American Dad	Family Guy	Jack Yard	Afterburn		Smackdown				Jack In The Box				Dr Katz	Weekends W/ D.L.	Comedy Central Presents	Premium Blend
Lifestyle Network	Embellish This	DIY Crafts	DIY Jewelry Making	Your Private Island	Fine Living Special		Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Wolfgang Puck	Food Network Special		E! Entertainment Special		Sylvia				Fashion Trance	
MTV Philippines					Homecoming	Room Raiders	Boiling Points	Pimp My Ride	Homewrecker	PunkD	Wildboyz								
MYX		Pinoy MYX Countdown				Take 5	MYX Bandarito	MYX News	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Presents			MYX Hit Chart			MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	The Taiwan Touch/ Monkey Business	Tornado Tornado Six Pack	Tornado: Tornado Terror	Explorations Powered By Duracell	Rough Trades	Best of the Week: India's Other Paradise		Volcano Eruption at Pinatubo		Explorations Powered By Duracell	Amazing Moments	Mega Asia Frontlines of Construction - Cities				Nat Geo Investigates: Air Crash Investigation		Nat Geo Investigates: Interpol Investigates	
NBN		Tinig ng Bayan (Sining Gising)						Tinig ng Bayan (Live)		Congress in Action		The Working President	Under Construction	The Sports List		Pilipinas Ngayon Na!		Special Events From Malacanang And Tinig Ng Bayan (Replay) W/ Career Zone	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Euromaxx	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Pagbubunyag		Net 25 Report weekend edition	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	Tribe	Convergence	INC Chronicles	INC Chronicles	Ang Tamang Daan		Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	Net 25 Report Weekend Edition	DWTV Journal Weekend Edition	Auto Motor
Nickelodeon	Drake & Josh/Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Just For Kicks	Catscratch	Avatar: Legend Of Aang	Danny Phantom/ Kid's Choice Awards	Troliz	SpongeBob SquarePants	Just For Kicks	Zoey 101	Ned's Declassified School Survival Guide	Dark Oracle	Girls In Love	The Amanda Show	The Brothers Garcia	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO		[illegible]					Sugo				Lastikman Unang Banat				High On Love				Keka
Qtv		Lois And Clark		Galaxy Angels		Bongga Ka Star		Ang Pinaka...		Pop Star Kids		May Trabaho Ka		Sunday Super Sine				Groupee TV	
RPN 9		Golf Power	Fistorama		Sure Hits	WWE Smackdown		JAG		Navy Ncis		Without A Trace		Sunday's Big Event					The Working President
SBN 21				Buhay Pinoy		Shepherds Voice		New Life				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Gabay At Aksyon			
Solar Sports		World Pool 2006 Masters		World Pool 2006 Masters		World Pool 2006 Masters		World Pool 2006 Masters		Rocky Mountain Rage & Hawks @ Supersonics				Boxing: V. Harris vs S. Johnston					
Sports Plus				Motoring Today		BM Scuba Diving	Nopi Tunervision	Pennsylvania 500 Highlights		World Game		World's Greatest Auto Show Tokyo		Raceworld		Evian Masters Day3			
Star Movies		Money Train (3:15PM)				Taxi			Snatch (6:45PM)				Opening Night The Art Bully	The Aviator					
Star World		The Office	Arrested Development	Kevin Hill		Business Week Asia	Travel Asia	The Apprentice		Haunted Houses Road Trip		Oprah Winfrey Show		For The Record		Parkinson		Hollywood Shootouts	Oprah Winfrey Show
Studio 23				PBL Unity Cup Game 2		Exposed					Y Speak Live		US Girls	Desperate Housewives		Dead Tour (10:15PM)	Tru Calling (10:45PM)		Angel

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.

The Block-SM City North Edsa opens

THERE'S A NEW KID - SO TO SPEAK - ON THE SM City North-Edsa block.

The Block was conceived as an annex to the existing mall. Built on what used to be a parking lot, it adds another 76,405 square meters of gross floor area to the main mall complex.

Located to the right of the main mall and linked to it by a footbridge, The Block was designed to be a little more upscale, but not to the point that it intimidates the mass market. With its minimalist modern look both in its interior and exterior, it gives an architectural identity, which will be carried over to the rest of the complex when overall expansion and refurbishment are undertaken and completed.

Very appropriately, huge blue and aqua blocks-either glazed or metal clad-intersect the plane of The Block's façade. The glazed block is extended to create a dynamic nighttime look with advertising graphics. The simplicity of the mall's façade complements the simplicity of its interiors.

A five-level mall with a rectangular floor plate, The Block features a large central oval around which shops are arranged to form a three-level glazed volume. The perimeter shop fronts are embellished speed stripe signages, which lend an air of movement and dynamism to the atrium. Bridges cut across the oval in a T-layout, providing cross circulation.

The atrium's centerpiece is the impressive activity area highlighted by a two-level high square metal structure, which serves as a backdrop to events in the atrium. An equally sized solid oval roof tops the oval activity center with smaller circular skylights cut into it. The other ceiling spaces over the main public circulation areas are fitted out with playful looking parabolic light coves.

SM Prime president Hans Sy welcomes MTRCB Chairperson Marissa Laguardia joining them is SM Cinema's Ric Camaligan.

SM president Teresita Sy-Coson with Mrs Sonia Roco and Quezon City Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

MAYOR Sonny Belmonte together with Body Shop owners Vicente and Fe Muñoz.

QUEZON City 4th District Representative, Congresswoman Nanette Daza.

DOT Usec Ricky Alfonso, Mayor Sonny Belmonte and MMDA Chair Bayani Fernando.

Globe's Libreng Tawag bring home a kababayan from Lebanon

EVEN IN TIMES OF CRISIS, GLOBE AND ITS subsidiary Innove Communications does everything it can to help Filipinos stay connected with their loved ones abroad. As the conflict continued to escalate in Lebanon, Globe immediately launched an emergency assistance program to help our kababayans get in touch with their relatives in the war-torn country. Since July 20, Thursday, Globe and Innove, in partnership with Overseas Workers' Welfare Administration (OWWA) and SM malls, have been running the "Libreng Tawag" special outreach program for locally-based families of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in Lebanon and Israel. With this kind of commitment to Filipinos, Globe even helped reunite Merly Garcia and her daughter Lorelei who just came home from Lebanon last week after a dangerous ordeal.

On Saturday, July 22, Aling Merly received a call from her daughter on her cellphone. Lorelei, a widowed mother who had been working as a domestic helper in Lebanon for the past year, said that her Lebanese employer had been keeping her and several other domestic helpers locked up. Aling Merly quickly decided to go to Manila to seek help from authorities. When Aling Merly arrived at the Libreng Tawag center on Sunday, July 23, with her daughter-in-law and young grandson in tow, she immediately made a call to her daughter's employer in Lebanon and was told that Lorelei was already under the custody of the Philippine Embassy. However, when she called the Embassy in Lebanon, Merly was told that her daughter was not among the OFWs under its care. A double-check with the Embassy's records also turned up nothing.

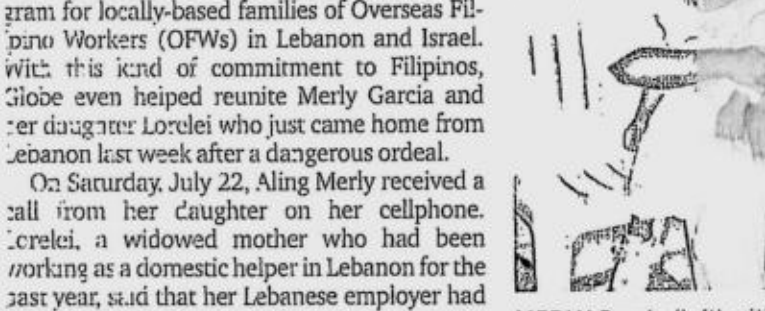
MERLY Garcia (left) with daughter-in-law and grandson.

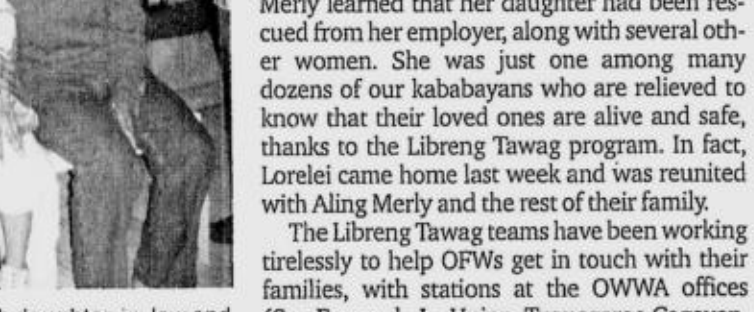
Frantic, Merly used the Libreng Tawag service to call Lorelei's employer again. This time, her employer's wife came on the line. She was then told that Lorelei had escaped to the mountains. "I was crying so much already by that time. I thought that my daughter would not be able to escape," Aling Merly said.

Aling Merly then asked her daughter-in-law to try calling Fr. Agustin Advincula, who had dozens of Filipino refugees under his care at the St. Vincent Lodging House of the Church of the Miraculous Medal in Beirut. Fr. Advincula's phone number was prominently displayed on the wall of the Libreng Tawag center alongside the number of the Philipine Embassy in Lebanon. The only Filipino Catholic priest in Lebanon, Fr. Advincula had already helped many Filipinos in the country escape or find refuge. Another free call to Fr. Advincula's number was answered by one of his staff, who confirmed that Lorelei was indeed in their custody. "Sa awa ng Diyos nandoon naman daw sya," Aling Merly recounted with a sigh of relief. Aling Merly learned that her daughter had been rescued from her employer, along with several other women. She was just one among many dozens of our kababayans who are relieved to know that their loved ones are alive and safe, thanks to the Libreng Tawag program. In fact, Lorelei came home last week and was reunited with Aling Merly and the rest of their family.

The Libreng Tawag teams have been working tirelessly to help OFWs get in touch with their families, with stations at the OWWA offices (San Fernando La Union, Tuguegarao Cagayan, San Fernando Pampanga, Pasay, Calamba Laguna, Iloilo, CDO, Davao, and Cotabato) and selected SM malls nationwide (SM Fairview, Megamall, Southmall, North Edsa, Manila, Cebu, Davao,Pampanga, Bacoor, and Dasmariñas).

Globe rises to the challenge of helping our kababayans by keeping Filipino families and loved ones connected, especially at the times when they need it the most. Aling Merly and Pinoys all over the world can rest in the assurance that Globe is there for them wherever they may be.





TABANG MINDANAW, GMA7 KAPUSO FOUNDATION REACH OUT TO INDIGENT SCHOOLCHILDREN

Tabang Mindanaw with founding member GMA7 Kapuso Foundation, in the spirit of partnership and public service, distributed 3,000 school bags and supplies to Grade 1 public school students in Lamitan, Tipo-Tipo and Maluso, in the province of Basilan, and in Indanan, Panglima Estino, Pangutaran and Pata Island in Sulu. GMA7 Kapuso's Unang Hakbang sa Kinabukasan Program is on its third year of implementation in the BaSulTa archipelago. The joint undertaking was spearheaded by TM executive coordinator Milet B. Mendoza and GMA7 Kapuso Foundation's Jodink A. Sayong, Michael San Pedro and Danilo Fausto. The activity was implemented last July 17-25 and actively supported by local partners from the DepEd officials and teachers, LGUs, community leaders and the Pagtabangan BaSulTa Convenors of Basilan and Sulu.

Succession team in Publicis Manila announced

GUILLAUME LEVY-Lambert, chair of Publicis Asia Pacific, announced the hiring of Maria Teresa "Matec" Villanueva as chair and CEO of Publicis Manila to succeed Herminio Ordoñez who is due to retire in January 2007. Prior to her hiring, Villanueva was a senior executive officer for client service and business development of JimenezBasic. She is also the incumbent chair of the Adboard.

MA. Teresa Villanueva

MARLON N. Rivera

PAOLO A. Mercado

RONALD V. Barreiro

To complete the structure of a powerhouse team the following promotions were announced:

Marlon Rivera, currently executive creative director, has been promoted to president and ECD. Marlon has been responsible for inspiring Publicis creatives with sales driven consumer insights executed along modern dynamism of advertising visual literacy. With his new title, a creative entrepreneur, will further infuse the agency's creative product with entrepreneurial dimension.

Ronald Barreiro, current head and vice president in charge of Nestlé business, has been promoted to executive vice president in recognition of leading the Nestlé team to unprecedented organic and new assignment growths.

Paolo Mercado, currently managing director, has been named Publicis Dialog vice president for South East Asia with concurrent assignment as CEO of the local Dialog operations.

Paolo's responsibility will cover Asean markets as development and resource pointman while continuing his brand strategy work with Nestlé Group in Publicis Manila.

"We recognize Paolo's unique expertise in developing holistic strategies and creation of new business opportunities beyond the realm of advertising," Levy-Lambert said.

Paolo pioneered in introducing Shopper's Marketing strategies to Philippine clients such as P&G and Nestlé. The new Publicis Dialog team is another powerhouse composed of Gidget Aguinaldo as COO. Gidget was formerly brand activation and promotions director for Coca Cola. Leo Gonzales, formerly AVP for creative services at GMA7 serves as creative director.

All new positions will take effect by September 2006.

Ordoñez, outgoing chair and CEO, feels highly bullish about the restructured Publicis succession team. "We aim to fast track our ascent to the top three by opening new revenue routes with Publicis Dialog while simultaneously extending new business reach of the creative agency with the incorporation of Matec Villanueva's high industry credentials. Villanueva's forte is client relations and generating organic and new business growth."

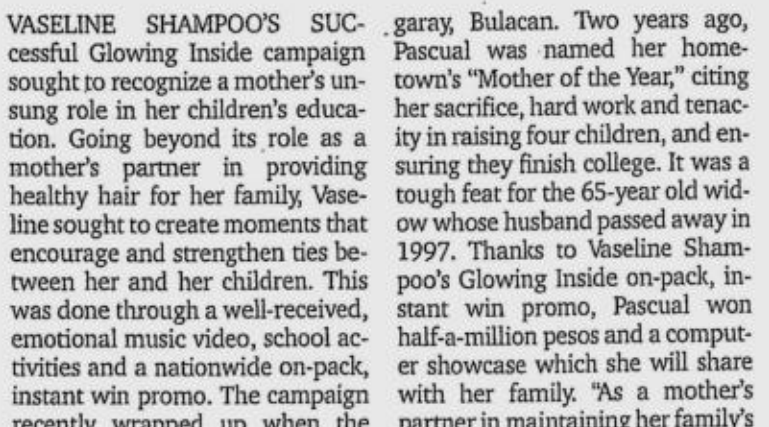
The current Publicis upper and middle management team are all alumni of the famous Basic Ad School whose culture of excellence has contributed to the many market successes of the Philippine and multinational brands in recent years by launching turn around campaigns.

"A truly competitive team must come from the same mould working with shared values in a culture of continuing excellence. That's the ideal succession team," Ordoñez said.

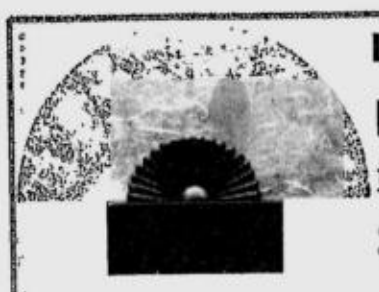
On the succession, Maurice Levy, Publicis Groupe CEO said, "I'd like to thank Minyong Ordoñez very warmly for his help during the last 10 years. He has shown how a great talent can make a difference. And Minyong makes a difference in everything he does. Publicis Manila is now ready for a new cycle of growth under Matec's leadership, after a formidable period of construction by Minyong and Paolo Mercado, whose skills will help us develop our Publicis Dialog network and deliver our unique offering of Holistic Communication in Asia.

VASELINE SHAMPOO'S SUCcessful Glowing Inside campaign sought to recognize a mother's unsung role in her children's education. Going beyond its role as a mother's partner in providing healthy hair for her family, Vaseline sought to create moments that encourage and strengthen ties between her and her children. This was done through a well-received, emotional music video, school activities and a nationwide on-pack, instant win promo. The campaign recently wrapped up when the winner of its on-pack instant-win promo and its Glowing Inside Graduation Tribute, where schools all over the country submitted videos of their graduating students serenading their moms with the Glowing Inside theme song on graduation day.

There could not be a more fitting winner for the on-pack promo than Celestina Pascual of Norzagaray, Bulacan. Two years ago, Pascual was named her hometown's "Mother of the Year," citing her sacrifice, hard work and tenacity in raising four children, and ensuring they finish college. It was a tough feat for the 65-year old widow whose husband passed away in 1997. Thanks to Vaseline Shampoo's Glowing Inside on-pack, instant win promo, Pascual won half-a-million pesos and a computer showcase which she will share with her family. "As a mother's partner in maintaining her family's healthy and shiny hair, Vaseline wanted to honor their selfless acts of love and support, and we are very pleased that the 'Glowing Inside' anthem and contests touched the hearts of mothers across the country," said Vaseline Shampoo assistant brand manager, Chris Monteron. "It's all about paying tribute to moms, and rewarding them for all their hard work."



CELESTINA Pascual, Vaseline Shampoo's on-pack promo winner, (third from left) is shown with two companions (beside her) as she receives her prize from Unilever officials. To her right are: Joy dela Rosa, brand manager of Vaseline; Chris Monteron, assistant brand manager of Vaseline; Jessica Lim, customer category officer; and Jan Nieto, customer category manager for Unilever Phils.



LIFESTYLE / D1

Pinoy arts, crafts fight back against global competitors

BUSINESS / B1

UK credit watchdog says RP banking system remains weak

SPORTS/ A31

'Boy Samson' Luat beats Taiwanese, nails Kaohsiung 9-ball title

ENTERTAINMENT / F1

ABC 5 confirms talent 'piracy'

Lobbyist tells how he bribed US lawmakers

WASHINGTON—IN 1992, Brent R. Wilkes rented a suite at the Hyatt Hotel a few blocks from the Capitol. In his briefcase was a stack of envelopes for six congressmen, each packet containing up to $10,000

LOBBYIST/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, August 7, 2006 ★★ 8 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 240 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Primer on effective whistle-blowing out

By Norman Bordadora

A STUDY CONDUCTED BY THE OMBUDSMAN and Jesuits in the Philippines shows Filipinos who blow the whistle on corruption prefer to press on against the wrongdoers despite professional and social difficulties the exercise entails.

The executive report of focus group discussions (FGDs) conducted by the Ehem! Aha!

PRIMER/ A8

Filipino refugees swell

Coast Guard to send 2 ships to help in evacuation

By Nikko Dizon, Christine O. Avendaño and Leila B. Salaverria

A DAY AFTER ISRAEL launched its heaviest bombardment against Hezbollah fighters, hundreds of frightened Filipino workers yesterday scampered to a Beirut church to await evacuation, as Philippine teams stepped up house-to-house searches and made phone calls to persuade other compatriots to leave, officials said.

In some cases, irate Lebanese employers slammed the phones down or told callers there were no Filipinos working in their homes, one diplomat at the scene told the INQUIRER.

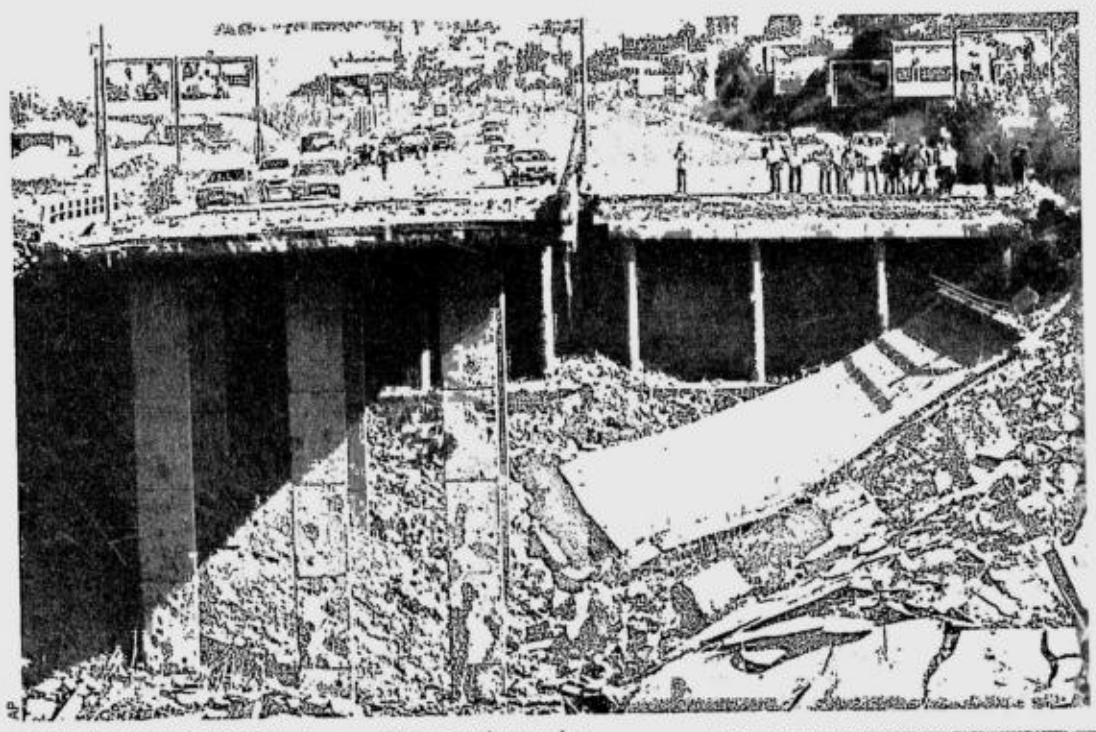
The relentless war combined with frantic calls from their families in the Philippines drove up to 700 more Filipinos to seek refuge at the Church of the Miraculous Medal in Beirut, before their evacuation out of the embattled Arab country.

"The bombings prompted the upsurge in OFWs fleeing to the relocation center, partly because of the pressure from their parents and relatives to leave Lebanon, telling them of the President's (evacuation) order," said the diplomat, who asked not to be identified because he was not authorized to talk to the media.

As the evacuation task force intensified its campaign to bring home, if possible, all of the estimated 30,000 overseas Filipino workers, President Macapagal-Arroyo appealed to Israeli and Hezbollah forces to spare fleeing Filipino and other foreign convoys from attack.

"The Philippines joins the international community in calling on the parties in

FILIPINO/ A12

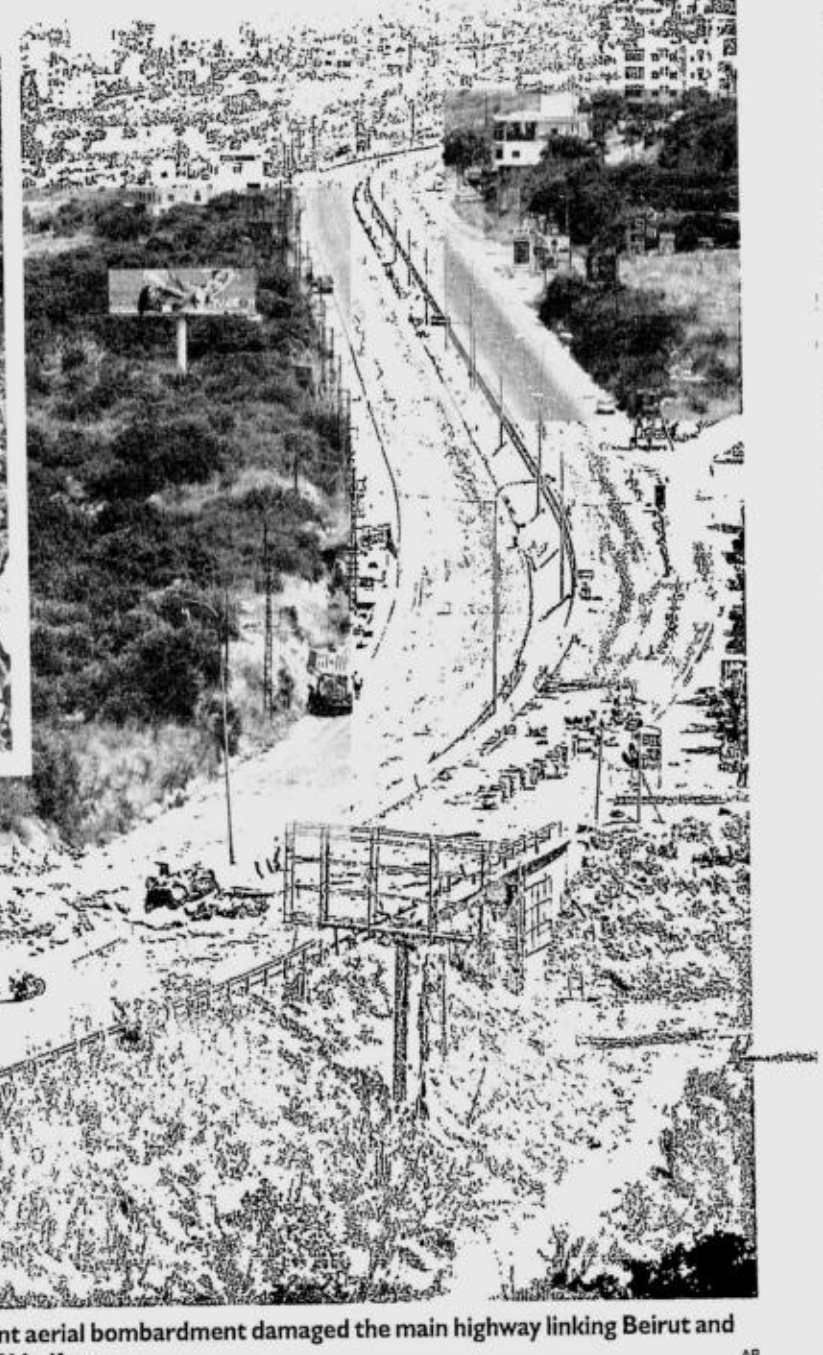


AP

BRIDGE TO NOWHERE. Lebanese citizens gather at the destroyed bridge of Halat, which links Beirut to the northern areas.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

GETAWAY BUS. Filipino workers flee Beirut in a 50-seat bus chartered by the Philippine Embassy at a cost of $1,200.



TROUBLED EXIT. Israel's incessant aerial bombardment damaged the main highway linking Beirut and northern Lebanon at the bridge of Madfoun.

AP

UN ceasefire resolution spurs heavier fighting

BEIRUT, LEBANON—ISRAEL AND THE Hezbollah have sharply intensified their fight with punishing air strikes, scores of rocket attacks and brutal ground fighting—in an apparent bid to inflict maximum mutual damage in the few days remaining before a draft UN ceasefire resolution takes hold.

Hezbollah guerrillas fired an enormous barrage of rockets at towns across northern Israel on Sunday, killing 10 people in the worst rocket attack on Israel since the violence began July 12. Nine of those killed were reserve soldiers.

"This was the most difficult thing I could have imagined in my career. There are nine bodies here covered in blankets, around us cars are going up in flames," Army Radio reporter Hadas Shteif said as she choked back tears. "On one side is the cemetery, on the other side are the nine young bodies waiting for burial."

Early Sunday, the Israeli Army broadened its offensive to attack positions of a Palestinian group in Lebanon. Warplanes bombed at least two camps of the Syrian-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, but no casualties were reported in either raid.

On Saturday night, jets also fired missiles that killed five people in two houses in the village of Ansar, near the southern market town of Nabatiyeh, witnesses and Arab media said.

Al-Jazeera television reported three people dead in Naqoura, on the Mediterranean coast side of Lebanon's border with Israel.

Three people died in overnight bombing in Al-Jibbain, about 4 km from the Israeli border. Civil defense officials also said they received calls from the village

UN CEASEFIRE/ A13

Taxi operators' earnings fall as gas prices rise

By Daxim L. Lucas
Business

SPECIAL REPORT

DEPENDING ON WHO'S DOING THE talking, taxi operators nowadays are either making a killing, or are being killed. Being killed by the high cost of petroleum products, that is.

The industry is reeling from the almost weekly increases in the price of gasoline brought about by the tension in the Middle East and supply disruptions in other parts of the world, according to the Philippine National Taxi Operators Association (PNTOA).

"Taxi operators are being hit hard," said Bong Suntay, head of the PNTOA that also serves as the industry's lobby group. "Almost every week, we experience price hikes."

Because taxi fares are regulated by the government, operators have been unable to raise their rates to keep up with the steady increase in fuel prices and maintenance costs.

Last year, the PNTOA asked the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) to grant it an increase in the "flag-down" rate, but the regulator turned this down, arguing that taxi operators continued to make money despite rising fuel prices.

"The last fare increase they granted us was in 2004, when the price of gasoline was still at P24 [per liter]," Suntay pointed out. "Now [the price of gasoline] is almost double that and they still refuse to

TAXI/ A6

LPG BOOST A gas station attendant fills up a taxicab, which runs on liquefied petroleum gas (tank mounted in the trunk) in Makati City.

REM ZAMORA

US lawyers' group cites Davide

HONOLULU—FORMER PHILIPPINE Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and US Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy have received International Rule of Law awards from the American Bar Association.

Davide on Saturday called the award his "greatest gift from the legal profession."

Kennedy said he accepted it with the understanding that there was still much to be done to promote the rule of law around the world.

Both Davide and Kennedy were honored at the ABA's national convention here—Davide for his work in election and legal reform in the Philippines and Kennedy for his work promoting the rule of law abroad.

Kennedy, who has been on the US high court since he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, has spent summers in Austria, teaching international and American law at the University of Salzburg. He also has been active in international judicial conferences.

Born on July 23, 1936, in Sacramento, California, he received his bachelor's de-

US LAWYERS'/ A4

Elites bid to seal nation's fate in secret dialogues

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

ON JULY 30-31, THE FATE OF THE NAtion came up in a secret workshop at the Ramon Magsaysay Center on Roxas Boulevard by an exclusive group of the national elite. No more than 30 representatives of the political sector, the business community, the Catholic Church, the NGOs and eminent civic leaders were present.

The press was barred and the participants were bound to a pledge of secrecy that approached that of papal conclaves, the proceedings of the Holy Inquisition and the rites of the Ku Klux Klan, Masonic Lodges, the Rosicrucian Order of the 17th century, and the Mafia.

Stripping the workshop of its mystique, it was essentially setting an agenda for the nation and defining key national issues—tasks that ought to be the responsibility of government, elected representatives, political parties, NGOs and sectoral groups (including trade unions and peasant organizations) putting their heads together to reach an open covenant or social pact "openly arrived at." People's organizations were conspicuously underrepresented in the list.

This mania for secrecy is an unhealthy political development. The fact that secret dialogues/workshops are initiated by the elite is the latest manifestation of its tendency to dominate the economic, political and social agenda of the nation through the exclusion of the poorer social classes from its conclaves.

The dialogue at the Ramon Magsaysay Center followed closely a secret "think tank" discussion initiated by former Pres-

ELITES/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2006

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/06/06

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Gordon pushes Owwa fund probe

Asks GMA to let officials testify in Senate

IN A BID TO AVERT ANOTHER MAJOR INSTITUtional clash, Sen. Richard Gordon has appealed to President Macapagal-Arroyo to let executive branch officials face the Senate inquiry today into the alleged Overseas Workers Welfare Administration fund mess.

Otherwise, these officials, who snubbed the first hearing on July 31, could run the risk of being cited in contempt, or worse, being charged in court for defying summonses to appear at legislative inquiries, said Gordon yesterday.

"I'm requesting Malacañang to send them and stay away from making it appear that they don't want to cooperate because the Senate is bad," Gordon, who filed the resolution seeking an inquiry into the government's preparedness to evacuate Filipino workers out of Lebanon, said in an interview.

Another snub by these officials, he warned, would weaken not only the Senate, but Malacañang as well.

"Both institutions will lose. The executive, the President, will appear as if she's hiding something and the people will be less educated about what the Senate's job is, which is to craft legislation and to investigate how money is used and how laws are being enforced," he said.

"The Senate could cite them in contempt or file suit against them for culpable violation of the Constitution," Gordon said, when asked about the Senate's options in case of another snub, stressing that the law requires the presence of officials in inquiries in aid of legislation.

The Supreme Court had declared as unconstitutional the gag on officials in Executive Order No. 464 which had prevented the officials from testifying in congressional hearings without authorization from Ms Arroyo.

Subpoenas issued

The investigating labor committee had issued subpoenas to Owwa chief Marianito Roque, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos, Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor and Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Rosalinda Baldoz.

But Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita has indicated the officials will skip anew the hearing set for 1 p.m. today so they could focus on the evacuation of the estimated 30,000 Filipino workers from the besieged Middle East country.

The Senate opened the inquiry last week amid reports that the government's slow piece-meal approach in evacuating the distressed workers was an offshoot of what the country's envoy in Lebanon claimed was a shortage of funds.

Owwa funds were believed to have been diverted to other purposes in the run-up to the May 2004 presidential vote—a charge denied by Owwa.

Joker's call

On Sunday, Sen. Joker Arroyo called for a deferment of the Senate hearing.

"First things first. Let's concentrate on evacuating and bringing out the workers to safety first, after that we can go and investigate where the Owwa funds are," Arroyo told the INQUIRER.

"We cannot afford another confrontation between the Senate and the Palace at this time. It would not do the OFWs, and the country, any good," Arroyo said.

Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who is seeking a more thorough audit of the Owwa funds under Roque's watch, said the Senate, by a consensus, could file a motion with the Supreme court citing these officials in contempt if they skipped today's hearing.

"Let's see if Executive Secretary Ermita would go to jail for them," he said in an interview on dzBB.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, chair of the labor committee, had earlier warned arrest warrants be issued against officials who would defied the subpoenas. "They have no reason not to appear again," he said in an interview.

What statute?

Estrada wrote Ermita this week saying there were several proposed bills related to Gordon's resolution to counter the executive secretary's claim that there was no mention of statute that prompted the inquiry in the invitation, the main reason cited by the officials for skipping the first hearing.

In his Aug. 2 letter, the senator said that while Congress wasn't required to indicate the "possible needed statute" in its invitation, he was providing Ermita with a partial list of legislation if only to see the inquiry through.

He mentioned his own bill, titled "An act to institute policies and overseas employment and establish a higher standard of protection and promotion of the welfare of migrant workers," and several other pieces of legislation.

Estrada, however, rejected Ermita's contention that the officials be furnished advance questions, asserting that this applied only to the Question Hour, where invited officials have the privilege of choosing the questions to be asked.

Texters using Lebanon crisis to rile RP Muslims

A GROUP OF MUSLIM RADICALS is circulating a text message purportedly warning that Israel has assembled 400 rockets to destroy the Kaaba in Saudi Arabia's holy city of Mecca, one of the Islamic world's most venerated shrines.

If you come across this text message, ignore it, said Taha Basman, leader of the Center for Moderate Muslims (CMM). Basman said radicals were apparently provoking Filipino Muslims into violent involvement in the conflict between Israel and The Hezbollah in Lebanon.

"This is bad. They are taking advantage of the volatile situation," Basman told the INQUIRER.

He said the text message—"Israel prepared 400 rocket missiles to destroy Kaaba. Please pass to all Muslims"—began circulating among local Muslims late last week. On Saturday alone, he said he received the message at least 10 times.

Basman said he was worried because the propaganda was using the Kaaba—the cube-shaped structure in Mecca considered as one of the holiest places in Islam—as a rallying point to agitate local Muslims.

He feared that such agitation might create a more serious problem than the one generated by the publication of Mohammed cartoons in the western press several months ago.

"We believe in the neutrality of Filipino Muslims who are predominantly moderate," said the former University of the Philippines professor.

Basman said it was very unlikely that Israel would do something as stupid and disgraceful as attacking the Kaaba which contains the "Black Stone," generally considered a remnant of a meteorite.

"Israel wouldn't do that. They would never want the entire Muslim world to be their enemy," he said.

Alarmed by the possibility of radical Filipino Muslims riding on the Israel-Hezbollah conflict, the CMM, a nationwide organization of around 50,000 Muslims, has been conducting forums to educate the public on the Middle East crisis.

The center was established three years ago in response to the widespread misimpression that Muslims were terrorists. The bias then was heavily manifested in saturation drives conducted in Muslim communities whenever police were looking for suspected bombers. *Christian V. Esguerra*

'Hand of steel' to crush terror, vows Palace

MALACAÑANG VOWED YESTERDAY TO continue to use the "hand of steel" in flushing out terror groups like the Abu Sayyaf and the Jemaah Islamiyah.

"President [Macapagal] Arroyo commends the Armed Forces for gaining ground and pushing ahead with its offensive against terror," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said, reacting to the capture by the military the other day of a suspected terrorist training camp in Barangay Kagay, Indangan town, in Sulu.

The camp, located in the foothills of Mt. Bud Kapok, had fortified bunkers, ground shelters and sleeping quarters and was believed to have been used by the Abu Sayyaf and JI since 2000.

"The government has scored success after success in the campaign against terrorism and we shall continue to use the hand of steel in flushing out the network of evil," Bunye said in a statement.

He said the government's fight against terror was a "strategic campaign to support the global stand and to serve our own political and economic security."

He reiterated the Palace call for Congress to pass the antiterror bill to "further neutralize the movement of terrorist arms, funds and personnel across communities and borders, and to nip the threat in the bud without need for massive military operations."

The military has launched a major offensive in Sulu to finally neutralize or capture Abu Sayyaf and JI leaders Khaddafi Janjalani, Umar Patek and Dulmatin. The fighting has cost the lives of some soldiers and terror group members but the leaders continue to be elusive. *Christine O. Avendaño*

Lava spreads on Mt. Mayon

LEGAZPI CITY—LAVA FROM MT. MAYON spilled into Bonga gully and spread to other gullies facing Barangay Miisi in Daraga and Barangay Buyuan in this city, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) said yesterday.

The lava flow now covers the entire southeast sector of the volcano, Phivolcs said.

The lava front at the Mabinit Channel has breached the 6-km permanent danger zone by about 100 meters while the lava flowing in the direction of Bonga gully was 5.1 kilometers from the volcano's crater.

Phivolcs warned residents of barangays located within 8 kilometers of the crater in the southeast sector, particularly in the towns of Daraga and Sto. Domingo and this city, to be alert and be ready to evacuate if Mayon's activity escalates.

The change in the direction of the lava flow to Bonga gully slowed its progress toward the Mabinit Channel, causing it to stop just beyond the 6-km permanent danger zone, Phivolcs added.

The agency continued to remind residents and sightseers to keep a safe distance from the volcano because the lava flow could cause pyroclastic avalanches and fires.

Recent seismic activity on Mayon included 371 tremor episodes and 12 volcanic earthquakes while the sulfur dioxide emission rate was at 1,919 tons per day. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI S.L. Bureau*

Pastor's widow says dead soldier leader of husband's killers

By Juan Escandor Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

DARAGA, ALBAY—THE WIDOW of slain pastor Isaias Sta. Rosa urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to call for a speedy solution of his killing amid growing evidence pointing to soldiers as the suspects.

Sonia Sta. Rosa identified Cpl. Lordger Pastrana of the Philippine Army, the other dead man found by a creek beside her husband, as the one who was barking orders to the group of hooded armed men on Thursday night.

Isaias, a pastor of the United Methodist Church, was shot dead by some 10 armed men outside his home in the village of Malobago here on the night of Aug. 3.

"I believe my husband, who knew self-defense, was able to fight back and grabbed Pastrana's gun and was able to shoot him before he was killed," Sonia said.

She said her husband's wristwatch was found in the pocket of Pastrana together with an order of battle on Isaias dated July 22, 2006.

Brig. Gen. Arsenio Cabuay, 901st Infantry Brigade commander based in Villahermosa here, advised the slain pastor's wife to file charges with the proper agency.

"It is just an allegation and the dead soldier cannot defend himself anymore. Anyway, the administrative office of the 9th Infantry Division is already undertaking an investigation of the case and let's just wait for the result," Arugay said.

The 901st IB is under the 9th ID based in Pili, Camarines Sur.

Sonia said she feared for her safety because suspicious-looking persons were seen near her home since the wake last Friday.

She said a man visited her yesterday, introduced himself as a friend of the slain pastor and tried to force her say if she was able to identify Pastrana as one of the hooded armed men.

Sonia said she told the man, whom she believed was a soldier, that she knew all of her husband's friends and she asked him how he came to be associated with her husband.

She said the man, who did not give his name, left after she refused to talk to him.

Sonia said the military had been sowing disinformation by saying that Pastrana was a suitor of her daughter.

She said she easily identified Pastrana because he was the only one among the hooded armed men who was short and stout. The others were lanky and tall.

Sonia said the men who ransacked her house and abducted and killed her husband were not able to retrieve Pastrana's body because villagers quickly went to the place where the shooting took place.

She said that upon hearing the gunfire she rushed to her sister's house where the latter's husband came out and drove a tricycle around the village shouting that his brother-in-law had been abducted.

Sonia said the villagers responded and immediately went to the place where the bodies of her husband and Pastrana were found.

Isaias had been a project staff member of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Bicol, an affiliate of the militant Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, since 1984.

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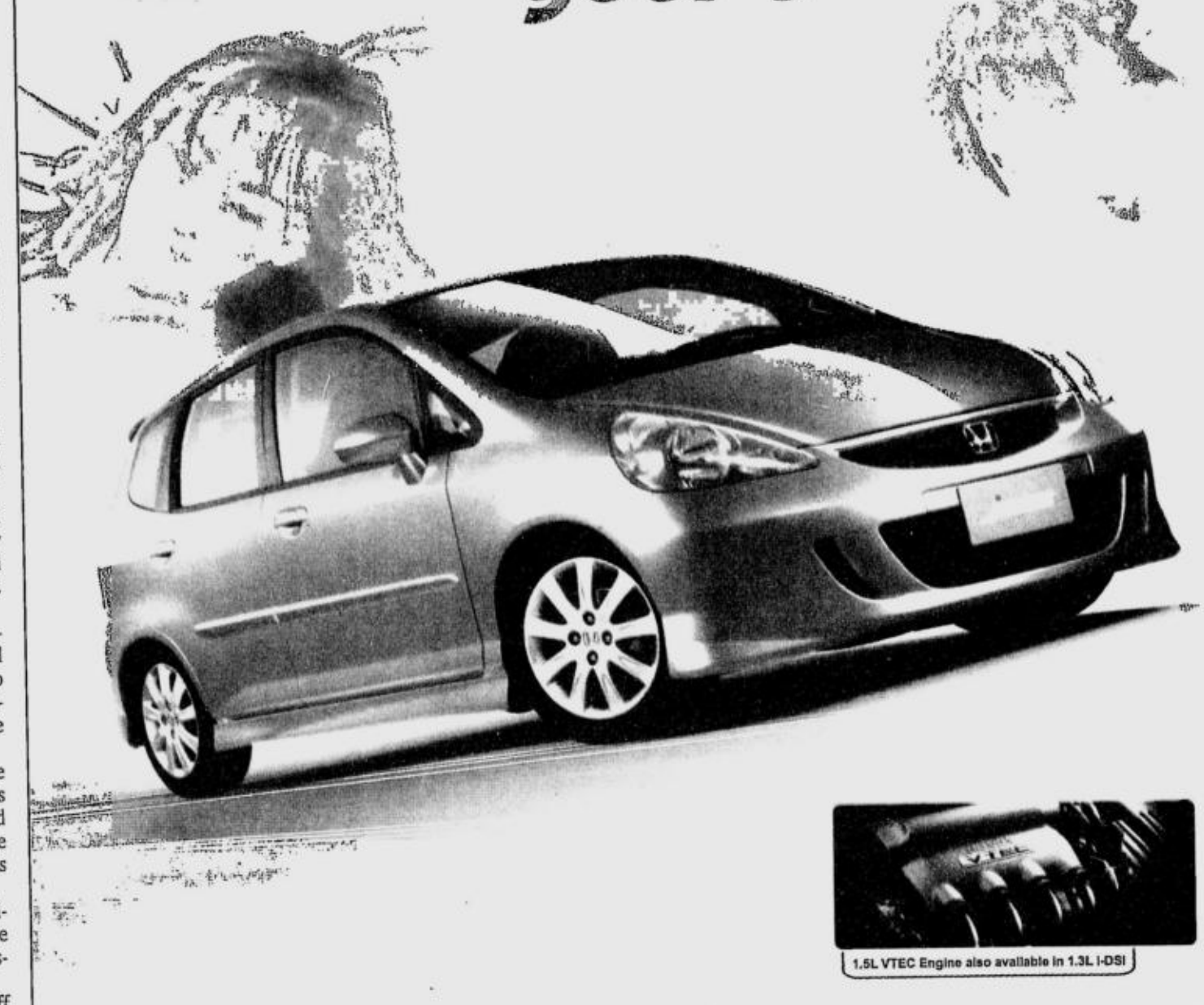

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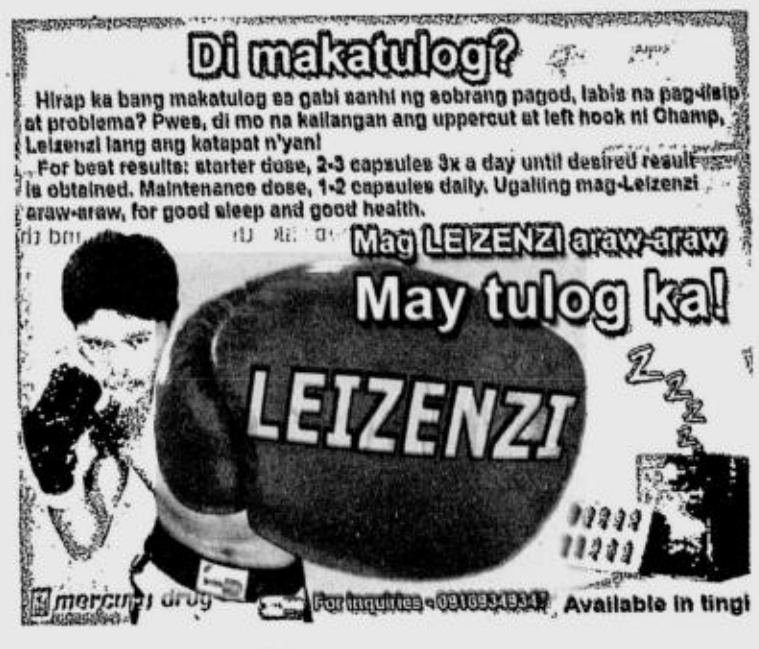

Delay The Signs Of AGING:

Wrinkles, Lines, Sagging and Dry Skin

What do the sun, a cigarette and a pillow have in common?

They are all possible catalysts for the appearance of skin aging signs. Constant exposure to the sun, for starters, can lead to what is termed as photoaging, which is aging caused by exposure to the sun's rays without ample protection. As a result, fine lines, wrinkles and loose skin develop over time. Cigarette smoking on the other hand, causes biochemical changes in the body that can accelerate skin deterioration. Research shows that smokers are more likely to develop deeply wrinkled, leathery skin than non-smokers. Also, cigarette smoke, whether from smoking or just being around a smoker, can significantly increase skin wrinkles and dryness. Pillows, or more specifically how a face rests on a pillow, can also lead to wrinkles. Studies say that resting your face on a pillow in the same way every night can eventually lead to wrinkles, or "sleep lines." Over time, as the skin loses its elasticity and becomes less resilient, facial lines easily appear and stay on the face.

These are only a few of many other factors of extrinsic aging, which is the result of external factors that prematurely age the skin. Intrinsic aging, on the other hand, is the natural aging process that begins in as early as the mid-20's. It manifests itself by slowing down the production of collagen and elastin, which are responsible for the skin's elasticity. Also, dead skin cells do not shed as quickly, giving the skin a dull, unhealthy complexion.

Whether externally affected or because of natural, physical processes, aging is inevitable. Facial Care Centre recommends state-of-the-art procedures to combat the skin's aging and treat flaws and pigmentations that are already existing.

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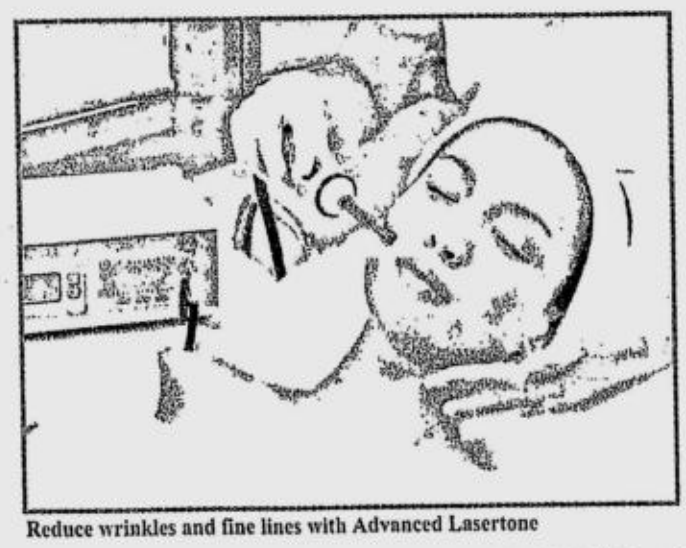

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US lawyers' group cites Davide

From page A1

gree from Stanford University and the London School of Economics, and his law degree from Harvard Law School.

Davide, the first Filipino judicial figure to receive the ABA international award, praised the ABA for it efforts to promote justice, freedom and democracy around the world.

He said it worked unceasingly to advance the rule of law and to improve legal systems, especially in developing countries.

From a membership of 100 lawyers when it was founded in 1878 in New York, the ABA now boasts of 400,000 members all over the United States. Its current mission is "to be the national representative of the legal profession."

Davide was appointed presidential adviser on electoral reform by President Macapagal-Arroyo in January, shortly after he retired from the Supreme Court. He had been on the court since 1991 and became Chief Justice in 1998.

The Philippine Supreme Court is patterned after that of the United States, which colonized the Philippines in the late 19th century and gave it its independence in 1946.

Davide headed the Commission on Elections from February 1988 to January 1990 and was responsible for writing the agency's rules of procedure.

A few months after his appointment as presidential adviser on electoral reforms, Davide submitted to Ms Arroyo a list of recommended poll reforms. These included:

- Fixing at four years the terms of office of members of the House of Representatives, as well as provincial, city and municipal officials.
- Banning the appointment of elective local officials and members of the House to any public office during their term, and the appointment of senators to any public office within three years from election.
- Desynchronizing elections, which entails the holding of national and local elections on different dates.
- Banning political dynasties.
- Prohibiting officials from switching parties in the middle of their terms.
- Making the prosecution of these kinds of cases easier.
- Slapping stiffer penalties for election offenses.

Political dynasties

Davide said some of his recommendations included proposals he had submitted to the 1971 Constitutional Convention (Concon) and to the 1986 Constitutional Commission (Concom), particularly on political dynasties and nepotism.

He was a member of both the Concon and the Concom.

Davide was born on Dec. 20, 1935, in Argao, Cebu. He graduated from the University of the Philippines College of Law, and taught at Southwestern University in Cebu. *With a report from INQUIRER Research*

DAVIDE: ABA award is the "greatest gift from the legal profession." PDI PHOTO

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Elites bid to seal nation's fate in secret dialogues

From page A1

ident Fidel Ramos among his fellows who, it was revealed by one participant, drew up a short list of the next leaders of the country in the post-Arroyo period.

Format betrays bias

The dialogue, the Ramos think tank, and similar undertakings have some elements in common. Their participants are narrowly selected by convenors who have appointed themselves as arbiters, defining the key issues of the national agenda and determining who would participate, thus narrowing discussions only to issues that matter to the elite.

Even the format of the dialogue betrays elitist bias. Despite the secrecy, enough material has leaked to the press to give the public an idea of what the dialogue was all about.

For example, it has been reported that the workshop was initiated by people identified with the Arroyo administration, among them former Ambassador to the Vatican Howard Dee and former Agrarian Secretary Ernesto Garilao, who was one of the moderators, from the Asian Institute of Management.

Whatever purpose the workshop may have served the administration, the more important point is that, according to one of the documents obtained by the press, the goal was "to gather people of influence and show that the Philippines is not a hopeless case."

A conference source said: "Despite the differences, we were able to show that the country is resilient, that we still have the sense of brotherhood."

The dialogue followed the format of high-powered, PowerPoint hi-tech international conferences, such as the World Economic Forum at Davos, Switzerland, as well as those run by AIM. It had an internationally renowned facilitator—Adam Kahane of Generon Consulting and of the Global Leadership Initiative. He reminded participants to "listen and not to argue."

Participants

The list of some 30 participants drew a cross-section of the national elite, including administration officials (who were a large representation), Archbishop Angel Lagdameo, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines; Sen. Manuel Roxas II; Washington SyCip; two representatives from Islamic groups; former Sen. Wigberto Tañada; two party-list representatives; former University of the Philippines president Dr. Jose Abueva; Christian Monsod of the One Voice movement; and, to give a semblance of opposition balance, two members of the Cabinet Gang of Ten who bolted the Arroyo administration in July 2005.

From this composition, it is not surprising that the workshop narrowed the country's key issues to five—education and moral values, peace and social justice, livelihood, and resource generation for infrastructure and social projects, and legitimacy.

Predictably, the workshop ran into a brick wall in the legitimacy issue which sparked a contentious debate.

One anti-Arroyo participant said: "We can't tackle the rest of the issues until we settled the legitimacy issue first."

This forced the group to schedule a workshop on this issue alone on Aug. 17, promising to lead it to what the bishops termed in their last pastoral letter as an "unproductive exercise."

Bishops being used

Based on the proceedings of July 30-31, it was not surprising that the bishops-representatives were reported to be considering withdrawing from the dialogue because they were beginning to feel that they were being used to legitimize the workshop.

The bishops' suspicions were aroused by a draft of statement that was intended to be signed by Archbishop Lagdameo (he didn't sign it).

The draft obtained by the INQUIRER, quoted Lagdameo as saying that "the position of representatives from government is that legitimacy is a nonissue; but a significant number of participants believed the reality that legitimacy is an issue that needs closure."

Expect fireworks on this on Aug. 17. But whatever pyrotechnics will happen should not make us overlook the main point of this article—that the workshop is a self-appointed elitist exercise, in search of solutions defined by elite interests.

Correction

A STORY, "RP hospitals cash in on medical tourism" on Page A1 of the July 31 issue misstated the name of one of the hospitals participating in the Philippine Medical Tourism Program in Las Piñas. The hospital is the Las Piñas Doctors Hospital, not Las Piñas Medical Center.

* * *

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Inquirer names '06-'08 scholars

FIVE JUNIORS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE Philippines' College of Mass Communication and one each from the University of Sto. Tomas and University of the East are the INQUIRER University Scholars for school years 2006-2008, Alexandra P. Romualdez, Philippine Daily Inquirer president, announced yesterday.

Aside from paying their tuition and other fees, the INQUIRER will give the scholars a monthly stipend and an allowance for books and school supplies.

The scholars are Penelope Iole P. Endozo, Jessica Anne D. Hermosa, Kristine Felisse C. Mangunay, Reuben Joel P. Mercado II and Joan Andrea S. Toledo of UP, Shelly Faune C. Dimaculangan of UST and Joba A. Botana of UE.

They are required to have no grade below 2 (85 or B) and will intern at the INQUIRER during vacations, which would be credited to their practicum. On graduating, they may work at the INQUIRER for at least one year.

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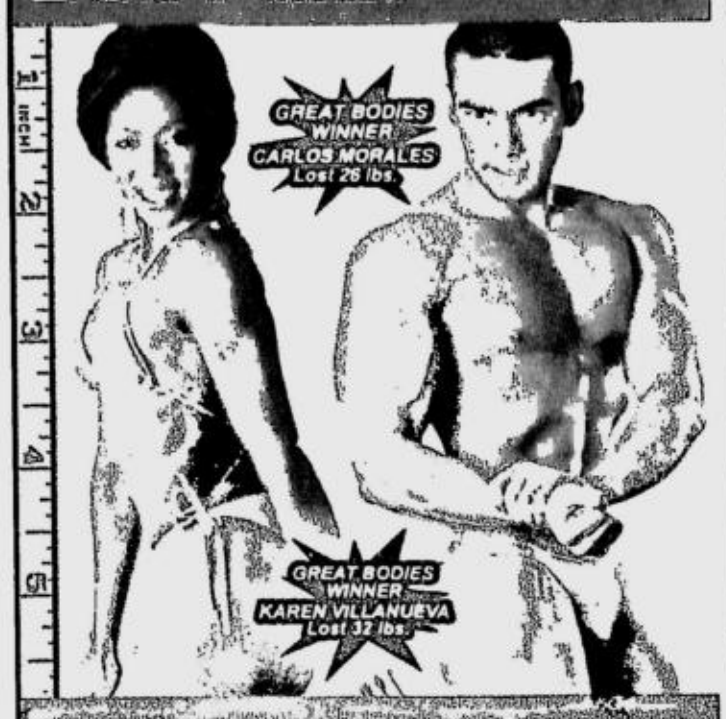

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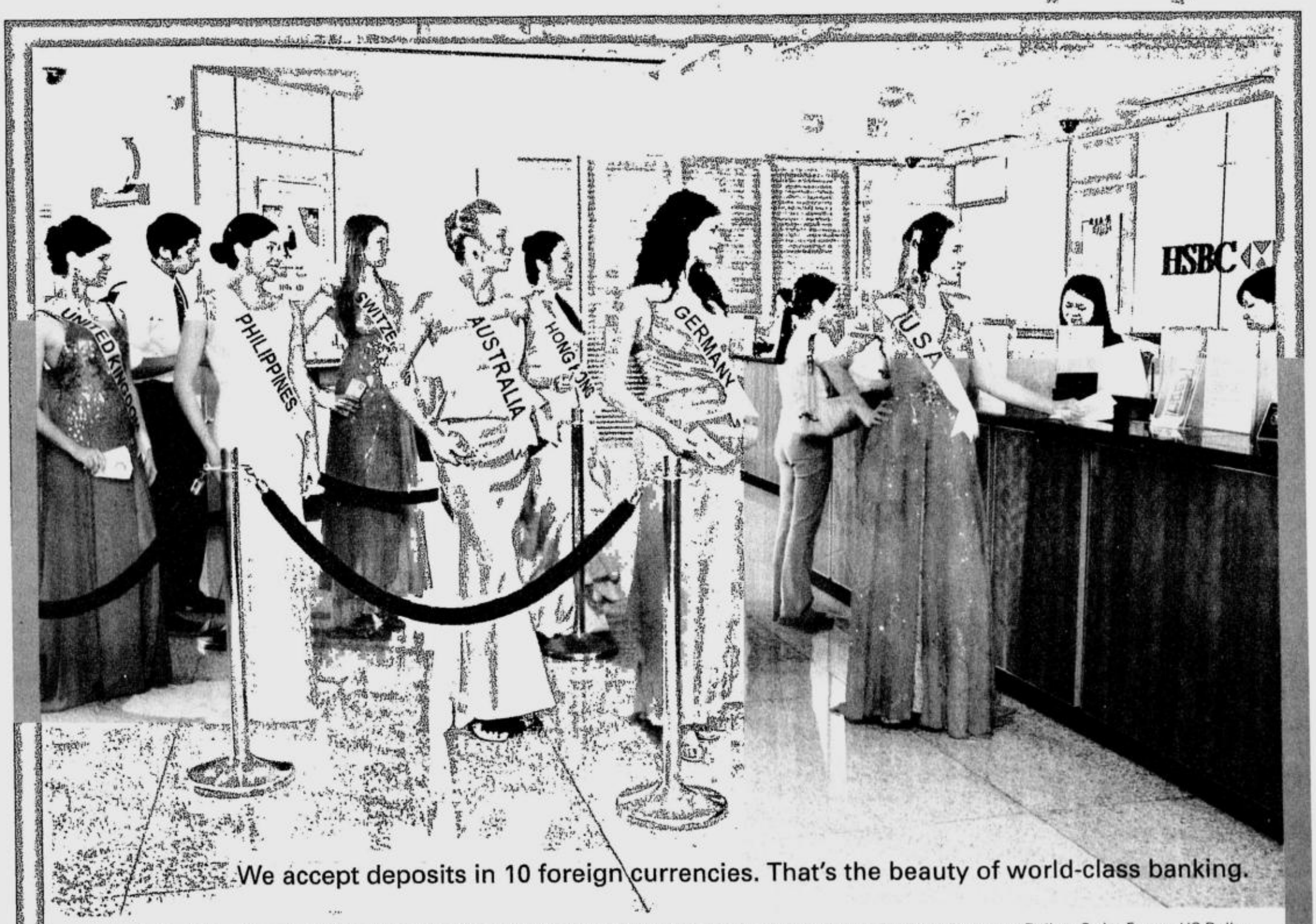

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Taxi operators' earnings fall as gas prices rise

From page A1

hear our petition."

Declining numbers, profits

About 40,000 taxis are registered with the Land Transportation Office all over the country. Of this number, about 36,000 operate in Metro Manila.

About 28,000 taxis in the metropolis are owned either by small players—defined as those that own five units or less—or single-unit operators.

The difficult operating environment has made the taxi business less and less profitable, according to Suntay.

Indeed, LTO records showed about 7,000 fewer taxi units were registered at the end of last year compared with the previous year.

"Many operators are going out of business and just choose to sell their units," Suntay said, adding that small operators and single-unit operators were particularly hard-hit by the price squeeze.

Cutting down on trips

Other operators are choosing to cut down on trips or on the number of days during which they operate their units.

"Many drivers try to choose dates when the volume [of riders] is highest," the PNTOA president said. "Usually, they choose to go out on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays."

On other days, it is cheaper to leave the taxis in their garages rather than take them out.

While driving or operating taxis used to be profitable, such is no longer the case.

"In 2000, a driver who took out a taxi for 24 hours could earn P800 a day, net," Suntay said. "Nowadays, they're lucky if they can make P450."

Excluding other expenses like meals, Suntay said a driver nowadays could take home an average of only P150 a day.

The situation is so bad that more and more drivers choose to abandon their vehicles by the roadside and escape having to pay the daily fee ("boundary") to the unit owners on days when earnings are particularly weak.

"Abandoned vehicles are a big problem for us," Suntay said.

Unconvinced

The feisty head of the LTFRB doesn't buy Suntay's sob story.

"Who says [taxis] are losing money?" said Ma. Elena Bautista. "They're making a lot."

The LTFRB chair said she asked three of her staff members to pose as drivers and lease taxis from operators and operate them for a day, just to see whether the PNTOA's complaints were valid.

Her undercover drivers each paid the operators a P600 "boundary" fee to rent the taxis for 12 hours, and spent an additional P1,000 for gasoline.

The result at the end of the day?

"They took home P700," Bautista said. "That's bigger than my salary for a day."

Because of this, the LTFRB has refused to hear the fare increase petition filed by the taxi association in October last year.

Find balance

"They simply have to find a balance," Bautista said, admitting that taxis that operate for 24 straight hours are bound to earn less because of the "dead hours" of the day.

Based on the reports of her field agents, Bautista said drivers who took out taxis for 24 hours still made, on the average, P500 a day.

"What are they complaining about?" she said.

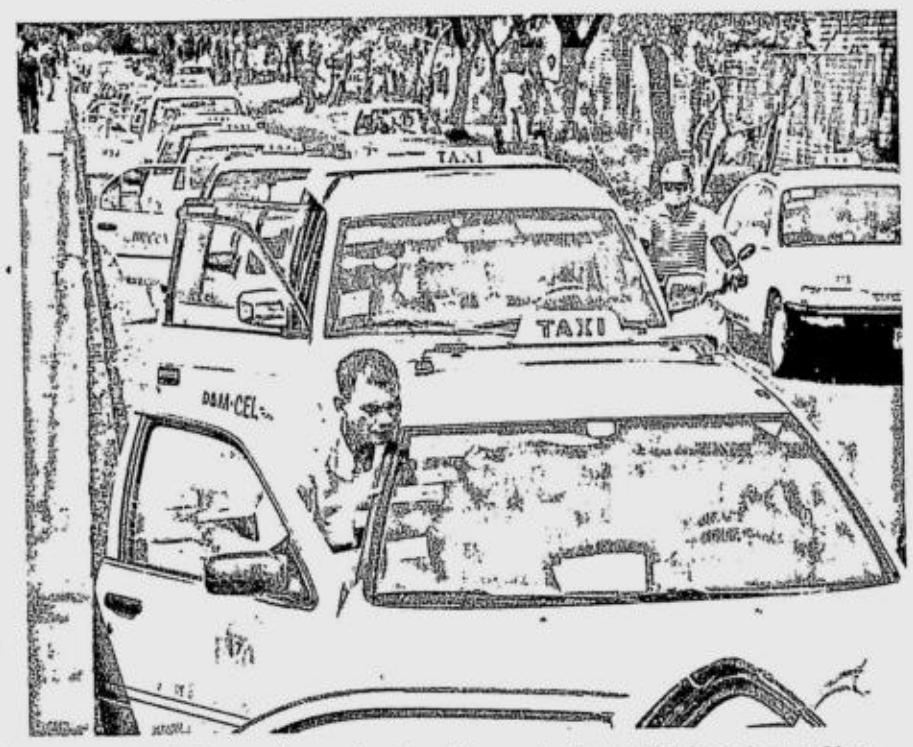
The LTFRB chair was also unwilling to compromise on several requests for concessions that Suntay's group had put forward, including the suspension of the requirement for taxis to install expensive receipt-issuing meters by this month. The measure is meant to help the Bureau of Internal Revenue collect more taxes from this lightly-taxed sector.

"They have to pay taxes," she said. "That's the law."

Enter the 'solution'

While the LTFRB and the PNTOA are at odds over almost every issue, they do see eye to eye on one particular remedy for the taxi industry.

Both believe that the conversion of taxis from gasoline to liquefied petroleum gas-using vehicles will help make the taxi business more profitable.



THE DIFFICULT operating environment has made the taxi business less and less profitable, according to the president of a taxi operators' association. AFP

This rare common ground is giving rise to a whole new industry.

"We're seeing more and more clients asking to convert their cars to LPG, especially among taxis," said Jere Myles Fregil, the sales and marketing director of Ambienergy Enterprises Inc.

The company specializes in converting gasoline-powered cars into LPG-powered ones, and it is proving to be a lucrative business.

At present, about 5,000 cars around the country—mostly taxis—are already running on LPG. Between 55 percent and 60 percent of these conversions were made by Ambienergy which, along with two other firms, accounts for almost the entire local market for LPG conversions.

Fregil said the rationale for shifting to LPG power was obvious.

"LPG costs P25 per liter compared with about P44 per liter for gasoline," he said. "So automatically, you save around 40 percent in fuel costs."

From this, the operator subtracts a "wastage" of 10 percent because of the LPG tank's weight, which is equivalent to the weight of one passenger.

"So while you get about 10 kilometers per liter for gasoline engines, you'll get between eight and nine kilometers on LPG power," he said. "That's still savings."

In addition, LPG burns cleaner than gasoline or diesel, making it one of the most environment-friendly fossil fuels available on the market.

Conversion, however, doesn't come cheap.

Obstacles

Price is the biggest obstacle to more widespread use of LPG.

A conversion kit for carburetor engines costs P25,000, including the LPG tank and the labor to install it. The kit for a fuel injection engine costs P50,000.

The PNTOA's Suntay said most small taxi operators could not afford this investment, explaining that only large fleet operators could shell out the money needed to convert to LPG power.

Fregil acknowledged that the kits were still expensive. They are imported from Europe.

"The government has to help us by lowering the duties," he said. Fregil explained that the government levies a 10-percent import duty on the LPG tanks, ostensibly because similar units can be obtained from a local manufacturer.

He is hesitant to use locally manufactured tanks, however, due to their poor quality.

"This is a new industry and one accident can kill it," Fregil said.

Few refilling stations

The other obstacle is the lack of refilling stations to serve the needs of the growing fleet of taxis running on LPG.

There are only three Petron stations in Metro Manila which dispense LPG (one each in Pasig, Makati and Valenzuela), plus two more in Cebu, according to the Department of Energy.

Pilipinas Shell has seven LPG pumps installed in various taxi garages around Metro Manila and in provincial locations.

Small petroleum players like Unioil, Eastern Petroleum and Flying V are also putting up their own LPG stations.

Long queues

More stations need to be put up to prevent long queues when taxis fill their tanks, according to Fregil.

He noted that filling up LPG tanks was also a slower process than for a gasoline tank. "It takes about six minutes to fill up a normal 67-liter LPG tank," he said. "That's why the lines are long."

To solve these problems, foster the use of LPG and help the taxi industry survive, Fregil and Suntay said that government initiative was crucial.

Because the government, through the LTFRB, is not keen on allowing taxis to charge higher fares, both agreed that more had to be done to promote LPG.

"In Italy, the government encourages car owners to convert to LPG by paying them 1,000 euros," Fregil said.

For the cash-strapped Philippine government, however, such encouragement is easier said than done.

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Lobbyist tells how he bribed US lawmakers

From page A1

in checks.

Wilkes had set up separate meetings with the lawmakers hoping to win a government contract, and he planned to punctuate each pitch with a campaign donation.

According to Wilkes, his hometown congressman, Rep. Bill Lowery of San Diego, a Republican, had told him that presenting the checks during the sessions was not how things were done.

'Transactional lobbying'

Instead, Wilkes recalled, Lowery taught him the right way to do it: Hand over the envelope in the hallway outside the hotel suite, at least a few feet away.

That was the beginning of a career built on what Wilkes calls "transactional lobbying," which made him a rich man but also landed him in the middle of a criminal investigation.

Last November, Wilkes was described as "coconspirator No.1" in a plea agreement signed by Rep. Randy Cunningham, R-Calif., a member of the House appropriations committee.

In the plea deal, Cunningham admitted accepting more than $2.4 million in cash and gifts from Wilkes and other contractors.

Wilkes could also figure in a related investigation of the House appropriations committee. The inquiry has focused on ties between Lowery, who left Congress and became a lobbyist, and Rep. Jerry Lewis, R-Calif., who is the chair of the committee and the former chair of its defense subcommittee.

Speaking publicly for the first time since Cunningham's plea agreement, Wilkes said in interviews that he had done nothing wrong and did not believe that Lewis and Lowery had broken the law.

'I played to win'

Wilkes, who has not been charged in the Cunningham case, has refused appeals by prosecutors for him to plead guilty.

But Wilkes acknowledged that he was a willing participant in what he characterized as a "cutthroat" system in which campaign contributions were a prerequisite for federal contracts.

"I attempted to get help and advice from people who could show me the way to do it right," Wilkes said. "I played by their rules, and I played to win."

Wilkes described the appropriations process as little more than a shakedown.

He said that lobbyists close to the committee members unceasingly demanded campaign contributions from entrepreneurs like him.

Wilkes and his associates have given more than $706,000 to federal campaigns since 1997, and he said he had brought in more as a fundraiser.

Since 2000, Wilkes' principal company has received about $100 million in federal contracts. *New York Times News Service*

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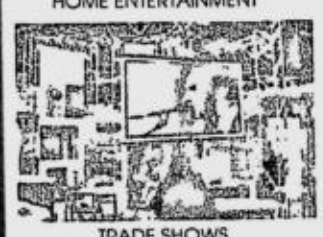
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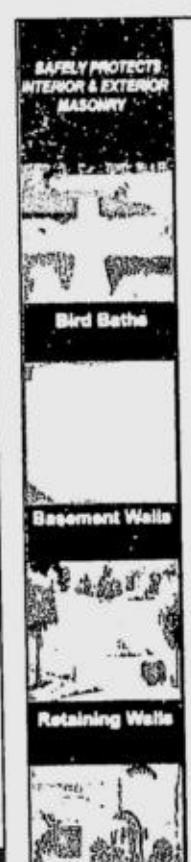
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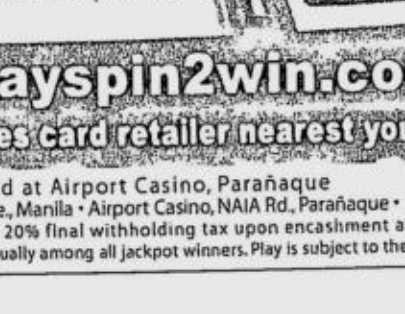

Because of her recurring abdominal pain, Ms. Helena Z Benitez had long been scheduled for endoscopy, a procedure that uses a flexible lighted tube (endoscope) to examine the body's internal organs. But fear of the procedure – the procedure's name alone scared her – made her put off the decision to undergo it.

"Only doctors at St. Luke's were able to explain the procedure to me in a comprehensive and reassuring way," narrates the former Senator.

Ms. Benitez promptly agreed to undergo gastroscopy and colonoscopy (endoscopy of the stomach and colon, respectively) at St. Luke's Institute of Digestive Diseases. The procedures enabled doctors to diagnose and treat Ms. Benitez's antral erosive gastritis, as well as endoscopically remove polyps in her colon.

"I was extremely satisfied with the results of my endoscopy," she says.

Ms. Benitez only has praises for St. Luke's personnel and facilities. "The doctors are very competent and the way they relate to patients is excellent. The hospital staff is very helpful. I am very satisfied with the services, personnel and facilities of St. Luke's. I recommend St. Luke's to others."

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The Institute boasts of the first and only operational GI Motility & pH laboratory in the Philippines that offers a wide range of specialized tests to patients with various motility disorders including esophageal reflux problems. The Institute is likewise home to the country's first Pediatric Endoscopic Section for children requiring specialized digestive care.

Also under the Institute is the Center for Liver Diseases, which delivers state-of-the-art diagnosis and management of liver disorders at par with the world's best liver centers. It is the first such facility in the Philippines to offer Radiofrequency Ablation (RFA), a minimally invasive treatment that utilizes heat in destroying cancer cells in the liver. The Center also hosts St. Luke's Liver Transplant Unit, a highly specialized team composed of surgeons and other transplant specialists.

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Primer on effective whistle-blowing out

From page A1

Technical Working Group said 83 percent of those who believed they had succeeded in blowing the lid off a corruption case admitted having encountered difficulties.

On the other hand, 95 percent of those who said the cases against the corrupt public officers they had exposed were ongoing and thus had yet to be convinced that they had succeeded declared they intended to press on.

"All the respondents of the 20 focus group discussions conducted nationwide exhibited encouraging demographic indications that offer hope and opportunities for whistle-blowing in the Philippines," said the study funded by the US Agency for International Development.

"Despite the overwhelming admission of the difficulties that come with the experience in whistle-blowing, the respondents showed no sign of retreat as they press on and play their part as whistle-blowers," it added.

The difficulties mentioned by the participants included being placed on a hit list, reprisal from higher-ups and even ostracism by peers who should instead provide a significant support base.

Apathy and the prospect of the cases going nowhere were also mentioned.

The technical working group, however, said the FGDs should be taken as indicative only in terms of "describing the state of whistle-blowing in the Philippines," not as a comprehensive baseline and probabilistic study.

"These findings will certainly benefit further studies that will be conducted in the future," it said.

The Ombudsman and the Commission on Social Apostolate of the Society of Jesus in the Philippines conducted 20 focus group discussions—four in Metro Manila, two in northern Luzon, two in southern Luzon, and six each in the Visayas and Mindanao—among 263 participants.

Gov't, public sectors

Almost half of the participants were from the government and public sectors. The rest included representatives from the religious, business, professional and youth sectors.

Seventy-three percent of them had gone to college.

Only 36 percent, or 94, of the participants had direct experience in whistle-blowing; 62 percent, or 163, did not but had personal knowledge of related issues, having been involved in anticorruption programs.

"Even those who have no direct experience in whistle-blowing but have a personal knowledge of issues affecting whistle-blowers imply a potential broad base of support," the study said.

It said the demographic profile of the FGD respondents showed that whistle-blowers could come from the government or private sector across income classes, educational levels, gender and age brackets, as well as sectoral affiliations.

"This is an important revelation in terms of who or what group of the respondents were inclined or averse to whistle-blowing. As the profile reveals, it seems there are many whistle-blowers in the broader and larger population of the country," the study added.

The study has so far led to the publication of "Aha! A Citizen's Primer on Whistle-blowing."

"Based on the FGD workshop results, the Aha! primer gives special emphasis on two important requisites to attain more success in whistle-blowing—completeness of documents or sufficiency of evidence and extent of external support," said Dr. Ronnie Amorado, Ehem! national coordinator.

"These two requisites help mitigate the two other constraints that hamper whistle-blowers—lack of protection and lack of legal and financial assistance," he added.

The manual tells prospective whistle-blowers to provide investigators with reliable and verifiable information, to get a reliable support base from family, friends and well-meaning colleagues, to get personal life insurance and to make the move with the best of motives.

"Authentic whistle-blowers are moved by a sense of concern for justice and the common good. The focus should be on the situation or the action or the threat to public interest, and not on the character of the person of the official or employee involved," said Fr. Albert Alejo, S.J., Ehem! team leader.

"A whistle-blower, for example, who alarms the public about the toxic waste being spilled in a local river is worried about the poisoning of the fish and the fisherfolk, rather than is intent on simply maligning the Department of Environment and Natural Resources," he added.

The primer encourages "formal linkages with the media, church and the academe for a better and wider critical mass." It however warned against "collaborating with political organizations and cause-oriented groups," saying it often compromised the independence and reliability of watchdogs.

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, August 7, 2006
18th Week in Ordinary Time
Sixtus II and Companions / Cajetan

1st Reading: Jer 28:1-17
Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

On hearing the death of John the Baptist, Jesus set out secretly by boat for a secluded place. But the people heard of it, and they followed him on foot from their towns. When Jesus went ashore, he saw the crowd gathered there and he had compassion on them. And he healed their sick.

Late in the afternoon, his disciples came to him and said, "We are in a lonely place and it is now late. You should send these people away, so they can go to the villages and buy something for themselves to eat."

But Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat." They answered, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fishes." Jesus said to them, "Bring them here to me."

Then he made everyone sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fishes, raised his eyes to heaven, pronounced the blessing, broke the loaves and handed them to the disciples to distribute to the people. And they all ate, and everyone had enough; then the disciples gathered up the leftovers, filling twelve baskets. About five thousand men had eaten there besides women and children.

Commentary

Hananiah the prophet preaches what the king and people want to hear, takes the wooden yoke Jeremiah wears as symbol of what will happen to the people, and breaks it. But Jeremiah cries out that now the yoke is forged of iron and that the false prophet raised false hopes in the people and he will die within the year. We forget often that Jesus lives in the shadow of Herod and Rome, and that most of what he says and does is in response to death. Now John the Baptist is dead and the people are scattered and fearful so Jesus feeds them with words of hope and bread together, knowing he too will know the fate of the prophets before him.

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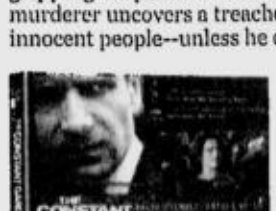

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RETAKE OF PRECEDING FRAME

Coming soon to a school near you – a call center

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

IF PLANS PUSH THROUGH, FRESH graduates looking for jobs will no longer have to look very far.

The Commission on Higher Education is building call centers in at least 25 state colleges and universities all over the country to be fully operational within the year, CHEd Chair Carlito Puno told the INQUIRER.

"This is the most ideal setup for a call center. Schools are guarded communities and companies [will] regularly get a fresh supply of graduates," Puno said.

For the project—the bidding for which will begin in two weeks—CHEd is ready to pour in at least P500 million.

The college teachers would be employed as trainers and the graduates would have instant jobs as call center agents.

The winning call center bidders will pay CHEd for the first five years to allow the commission to recover its investment. Afterward, the companies will pay the schools directly, boosting their incomes, Puno said.

Aside from being a "very lucrative business proposition," Puno said the project would boost the teaching of English in the schools and improve the quality of graduates.

Selected institutions will allot at least two classrooms for the call center operations, Puno said.

The following schools have been selected for the project: Mariano Marcos State University and Pangasinan State University in Region I; Isabela State University, Region II; Nueva Ecija University of Science and Technology and Tarlac State University, Region III;

Cavite State University, Laguna Polytechnic State College, Batangas State University, Palawan State University and Occidental Mindoro National State College, Region IV;

Bicol University, Region V; Aklan State University and Western Visayas State College of Science and Technology, Region VI;

Cebu State College of Science and Technology, Region VII;

Leyte Normal University, Leyte State University and Eastern Samar State University, Region VIII; Jose Rizal Memorial State College and Western Mindanao State University, Region IX; Bukidnon State College, Region X;

University of Southern Philippines, Region XI; University of Southern Mindanao, Region XII; Northern Mindanao State Institute of Science and Technology, Caraga Region; Benguet State University, Cordillera Autonomous Region, and Polytechnic University of the Philippines, National Capital Region.

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World youth to meet in RP

THE PHILIPPINES will host the 2006 International Youth Festival in which youth leaders, educators and delegates from over 40 countries will take part.

The four-day event seeks to promote the "World Program of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond," which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1995. The delegates will discuss ways to eradicate hunger and poverty in the world.

The festival will start with a wreath-laying at Rizal Park by local delegates at 10 a.m. on Aug. 10, to be followed by formal opening rites at Malacañang. The conference proper will commence in the afternoon at the Philippine International Convention Center.

The following day, selected delegates will visit the Baseco compound in Tondo, Manila, where they will build houses in the spirit of Gawad Kalinga.

On Aug. 12, delegates representing various faiths, races and regions will hold an International Youth Congress for Global Peace at the Araneta Coliseum. The guests will include Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, Dr. Hyun Jin Moon, president of International Youth for World Peace, and Filipino singer Lea Salonga.

Capping the festival on Aug. 14 will be the Mister and Miss University International Pageant at the University of the Philippines Theater in Quezon City.

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The TRADE RELATED TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TRTA) PROGRAMME is a European Union (EU) funded programme, implemented by the National Economic and Development Authority Programme Task Force (PTF) in coordination with, among other agencies, the DTI-Bureau of Product Standards (DTI-BPS).

One of the objectives of the TRTA is to improve the functioning of the World Trade Organization-Technical Barriers to Trade enquiry point of the DTI-BPS. This is done through the enhancement of the notification data processing and management system.

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A pre-qualification conference will be held on 11 August 2006, Friday, at 9:00 in the morning at the DTI Center Conference Room, 6th Floor, Trade and Industry Bldg , 361 Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City.

Those interested bidders can directly download the Terms of Reference (TOR) and related documents at the BPS website http://www.bps.dti.gov.ph or may inquire at DTI-BPS, and look for Mr. Ryan B. Estares at 751-4700 or 751-4729 or through e-mail address bps@dti.gov.ph

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Filipino refugees swell

From page A1

conflict to respect the flags of civilians, including Filipinos, seeking safe passageways and routes being used for evacuation and other humanitarian purposes," Ms Arroyo said in a statement.

More than 2,600 OFWs have returned to the Philippines, but most of the others are either trapped in Lebanon or simply refuse to leave, officials said.

"*Nakikiramdam pa rin sila* (They are seeing how things are developing)," the Beirut-based diplomat said. "Many of them are still thinking of their jobs. If they leave and return to the Philippines, would there be jobs waiting for them there?"

"It's doubtful we can get everybody out," the diplomat added.

Coast Guard ships

Two Australian-made Philippine Coast Guard vessels are to leave Manila for Beirut on Wednesday to pluck out those who want to leave.

But the two vessels, expected to travel at 18 knots (one knot is equivalent to 1.85 kph), will likely take 15 days at sea before reaching Lebanon, Coast Guard spokesperson Lt. Cmdr. Joseph Coyme said.

"They got scared of the recent bombings. It's also a result of the campaign of our officials to get OFWs there to go to our relocation sites," Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos said, explaining the surge in the number of OFWs in the Beirut relocation center.

Situation unpredictable

"They (the Lebanese) may be used to the fighting but the Filipinos are not used to seeing this kind of war," a diplomatic source said.

"We must get them out as fast as we could," he said, adding that the situation was volatile and unpredictable.

Relentless Israeli air strikes have destroyed roads and bridges in many parts of Lebanon. The Israeli Navy has also maintained a total blockade of all Lebanese ports since the war began 25 days ago. *(See story on Page A1.)*

Diplomats said the new land route to Damascus, Syria, which was used the other day to evacuate 456 OFWs, was bumpier and longer than the four-lane highway previously used for evacuation but which was ravaged by Israeli bombardment.

Others staying behind

"The convoys are now using old roads. They are OK, but they are asphalted and narrow, and pass along the coastline," the diplomat said. This added at least two more hours to the trip.

The OFWs who have returned to the Philippines said it took them 10 hours to get to Syria.

"It's because of the immigration checks upon entering Syria. The OFWs' papers are checked one by one," the diplomat said.

Philippine officials in Beirut either go house to house or call up Filipinos in Lebanon to inform them of the order for total evacuation.

Still, some OFWs told the embassy and labor officials in Lebanon that they would rather stay behind.

Nurses, cooks feel safe

Diplomats cited the case of Filipino nurses and hospital workers in Sidon and a group of OFWs working as bartenders, cooks and waitresses in a Japanese restaurant in Beirut.

"The nurses said they felt safe where they were while the group working at the restaurant said no one has been killed in Beirut," the diplomatic source said.

The OFWs who were being maltreated by their employers expectedly grab the opportunity to leave.

Philippine officials have also encountered Lebanese employers who banged down their phones on them. Other employers continued to insist to their Filipino household that there was no war going on, diplomats said.

Tearful parting

But some employers heeded the Philippine government's call and even brought their Filipino help to the relocation center.

"You'd see them in tears, hugging each other because some also treat their Filipino help as part of the family," the diplomat said.

The Lebanese immigration office has pegged the number of Filipino workers at 36,000, many of them undocumented.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said the latest batch of evacuees to leave Beirut was expected to arrive in Manila tomorrow. Another batch is scheduled to arrive on Friday.

Waiting for clearance

Based on reports from officials, none of the hundreds of OFWs still in the relocation center as of yesterday had been able to leave.

Officials said they were still awaiting clearance from the Israelis so the Filipino convoys could travel safely. They said it takes the Israeli government three days to act on a Philippine request for clearance if coursed through the embassy in Tel Aviv.

Conejos said the crisis team in Lebanon was scheduling the departure for Syria of 140 of the hundreds staying at the relocation site in Beirut.

Offer from Cebu Pacific

From Syria, this batch of OFWs will return home on a plane that Cebu Pacific is offering for free, Conejos said.

He said Cebu Pacific was in the process of picking up a newly acquired plane in Germany and since the flight to Manila would be empty, it had offered a free flight for the OFWs.

He said the 465 OFWs, who took a detour route to Syria after Friday's bombing of the Filipinos' usual escape route, were now at a holding center of the IOM in Syria.

Arriving tomorrow

This batch was expected to leave Syria today via a free IOM flight and were expected to be home tomorrow at 6 a.m., he said, adding that the agency was arranging another flight for Friday.

Conejos said officials had yet to consolidate their data on how many Filipinos had signified their desire to return home following the mandatory evacuation order.

He said officials also had no specific figures on how many OFWs remained in southern Lebanon, the scene of heavy fighting. All he knew so far was that the OFWs were concentrated in the town of Sidon and numbered 300.

Shuttle service

The Coast Guard said the two 56-meter ships leaving for Lebanon—the BRP Batangas and BRP Pampanga, both normally used for search and rescue—would do "shuttle service" between Lebanon and nearby Cyprus, Turkey and Egypt.

"We won't be bringing the Filipinos directly to the Philippines because that would take a long time. Our main concern is to get as many Filipinos out of Lebanon and into neutral areas in as little time as possible," Coyme told the INQUIRER.

Each vessel can carry about 300 passengers and is expected to make several trips between Lebanon and neighboring countries.

Each has a survivor's deck for folding beds, a decompression chamber, a helipad and communication equipment, including satellite phones.

Each boat's 50-man crew will include doctors, nurses and lawyers to help process the evacuees' papers, and a special operations group members to handle security.

Source of pride

Initially, the PCG proposed to charter ships to bring the Filipinos home, with each ship having a capacity of 3,000.

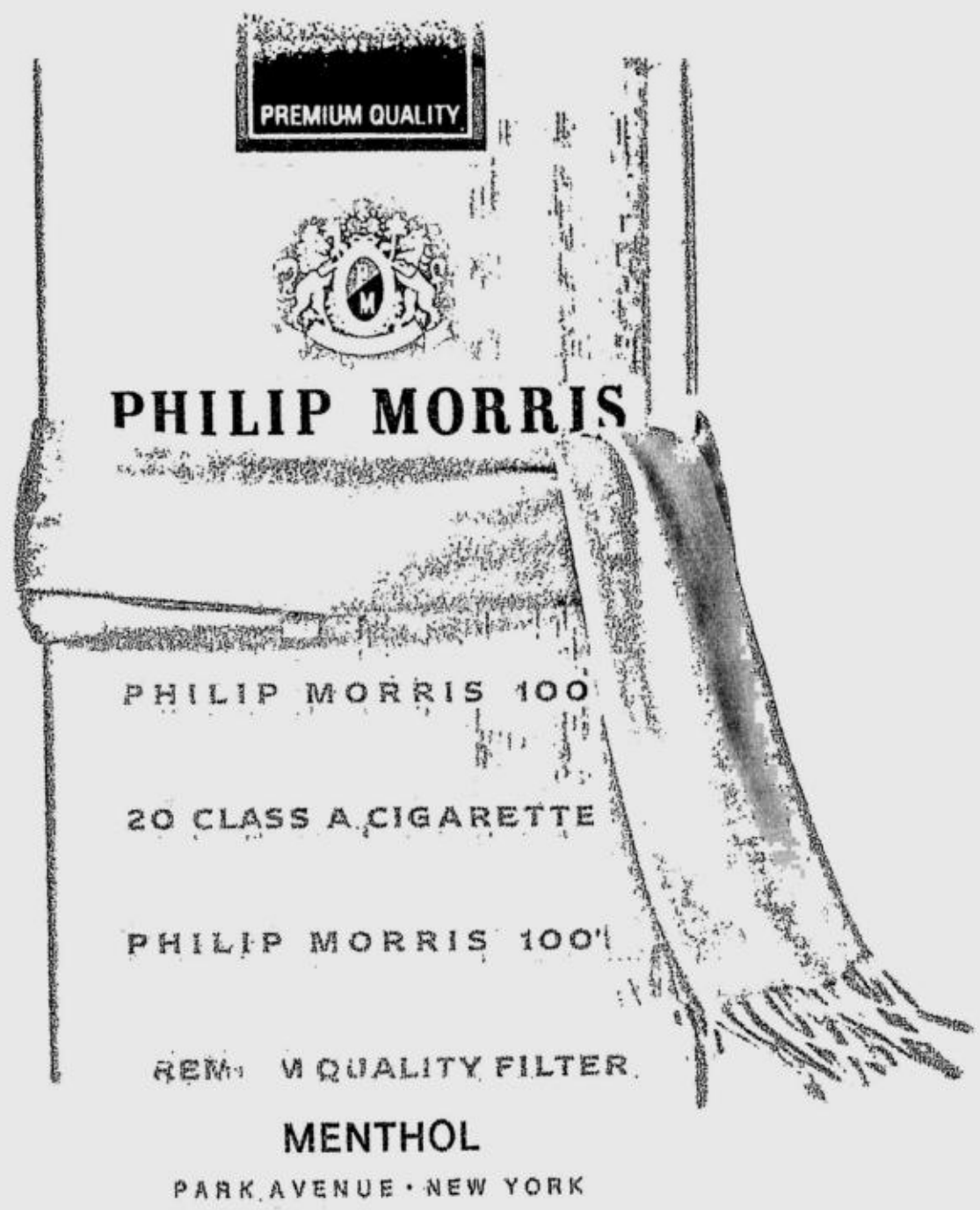
Coyme said the PCG had spoken with several shipping companies in the Philippines, but they were apprehensive about entering Lebanese territory in the face of the Israeli bombings.

In her statement, Ms Arroyo said she was very proud of the courage of the OFWs and of the work of the crisis team.

"The toughness and resilience of the Filipino are known the world over and this is another shining moment for our solidarity and mettle under extreme pressure," she said.

"The situation is fraught with danger and every prayer of hope and deliverance counts. This is a challenge addressed to the whole Filipino nation as the possibility of an early truce dims, and the call for unity and steadfastness mounts," Ms Arroyo said.

ISRAELI soldiers cover their e



Government Warning
is dangerous

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ars as they fire a mortar into Lebanon from their position on the Israel-Lebanon border. REUTERS

UN ceasefire...

From page A1

of Aiteet, just south of Tyre, saying people had been killed there as well.

Ground fighting raged across swaths of south Lebanon as well on Sunday.

Hezbollah guerrillas said they forced Israeli troops to retreat from the border village of Adaisse. Two Israeli tanks and two bulldozers were destroyed and their crews were either killed or wounded. The Israeli Army, however, denied the report and said its troops were still operating in Adaisse.

Witnesses said Israeli artillery shells rained down on Kfar Kila, less than a kilometer from the Israeli border. Intense shelling was also reported Sunday morning in the Lebanese border village of Houla and in villages along the Litani River, which runs east-west across south Lebanon.

No stop to fighting

Shortly after the United States announced an agreement with France on a draft UN ceasefire resolution on the 25th day of the conflict, a Hezbollah Cabinet minister said militant Shiite guerrillas would not stop fighting until all Israeli troops left Lebanon. The draft resolution makes no such demand.

"We (will) abide by it on condition that no Israeli soldier remains inside Lebanese land. If they stay, we will not abide by it," said Mohammed Fneish, one of two Hezbollah members of the Lebanese government.

An Israeli Cabinet minister said Israel, too, had no intention of ending its offensive for the time being.

"The Israeli military continues to act in the meantime, without letup, in many areas," Tourism Minister Isaac Herzog said. "We still have the coming days for many military missions, but we have to know that the timetable is becoming increasingly shorter."

Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Olmert met with senior ministers late Saturday. They approved the continuation of the Lebanon offensive according to the present guidelines, according to officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to reporters. The meeting of seven ministers did not discuss the draft UN Security Council resolution.

The Lebanese government said it objected to portions of the US-French draft resolution and would demand that some provisions be amended.

"The government has objected to the US-French draft resolution. It has made amendments to some of the provisions and has sent them to Lebanon's UN representative," an aide to Prime Minister Fuad Saniora told The Associated Press late Saturday.

Far more bumpy

Even if the UN Security Council adopts the resolution—hard-fought in long negotiations between the United States and France—the task of winning agreement from the warring parties portends a far more bumpy diplomatic road than the one already traveled.

As written, the resolution would be a difficult, if not impossible, pill for Hezbollah to swallow, particularly language calling for the "unconditional release" of two Israeli soldiers captured by the guerrillas in a cross-border raid on July 12. The hostage taking prompted the Israeli onslaught in Lebanon.

Hezbollah snatched the two soldiers to use them as bargaining tools for the release of Arab prisoners held by Israel, including three Lebanese. While the draft resolution directs Hezbollah to release the Israelis unconditionally, it only encourages "efforts aimed at settling the issue of the Lebanese prisoners detained in Israel."

That language may prove the fundamental deal-breaker for Hezbollah, whose leader Sheik Hassan Nasrallah vowed eight days into the conflict never to release the two Israeli soldiers without a prisoner exchange even "if the whole universe comes (against us)."

As it became clear a US-French agreement on the draft UN ceasefire resolution was drawing near, Israeli-Hezbollah fighting grew particularly intense.

More air strikes

Israel resumed air strikes on Hezbollah strongholds in south Beirut and for the first time struck in the Christian heartland north of the capital, rocketing bridges and severing the last major road link to Syria and the outside world.

In the past two days, Hezbollah fired at least 380 rockets into Israel, including the deepest strike of the conflict—on Hadera, some 80 km south of the border. Six civilians were killed in the attacks.

Over the same period, Israel conducted as many as 170 air strikes on targets in Lebanon, killing at least 45 people.

The UN peacekeeping force in the south of the country, known as Unifil, reported what it called "intense shelling and exchanges on the ground" all along the common border. Israel has taken control of a band of territory a few kilometers deep right across the frontier.

In the most dramatic operation, Israeli commandos battled Hezbollah guerrillas in a raid on an apartment building in the southern Lebanese port city of Tyre. The raid was the latest Israeli commando operation deep inside Lebanese territory aimed at taking out Hezbollah positions.

Both Israel and Hezbollah claimed victory in the Tyre battle. Israel claimed it was "very successful" in taking out a key guerrilla unit involved in firing long-range rockets into Israel—including one that hit Hadera.

Lebanese military and rescue workers said at least five Lebanese—including a soldier at a nearby checkpoint—were killed in the raid. The Israeli military reported eight soldiers wounded, two seriously.

Israeli jets continued pounding targets late Saturday and early Sunday with strikes near Tyre, southern market town of Nabatiyeh and two separate roads in the north of the country, both of them leading to Syria.

Death toll

So far, at least 580 people have died in the fighting in Lebanon including 502 civilians, 28 members of the Army and 50 Hezbollah guerrillas. Added to the total deaths were five Syrian farm workers killed in an Israel air strike just inside the Lebanese border in the Bekaa Valley whose deaths were not counted when the attack occurred on Friday.

The Israeli military issued a statement late Saturday saying it had killed more than 400 Hezbollah guerrillas since the fighting began. Eighty-nine Israelis have also died, including 55 soldiers and 34 civilians killed by Hezbollah rockets. *AP*

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

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Snubbing Jinggoy

ON ITS FACE, MALACAÑANG'S DECISION TO BAR officials of the executive from appearing before the Senate committee investigating the ongoing evacuation of overseas Filipino workers from Lebanon seems reasonable. The invitation, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said, did not conform to the new guidelines set by the Supreme Court: it did not refer to a "possible needed statute"; it did not specify the questions to be asked. Ermita added a practical reason: he and other officials invited to the Senate inquiry were busy with the evacuation.

EDITORIALS

It doesn't help that a trigger-happy Sen. Jinggoy Estrada was caught playing "gotcha." After last Monday's no-show, the chair of the Senate labor committee perorated: "By not attending this committee hearing, we have reached the conclusion that the funds from Owwa (the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration) cannot be explained." Really? After only one hearing, and when the evacuation is ongoing? There is a difference between scoring perception points and discovering the truth, or at least the legally actionable. Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile should give him a crash course on how to lay the predicate.

But—here's the truth, or part of it—the no-show forms part of a pattern of official evasiveness that cannot be ignored. Senate President Manuel Villar, whose election last month generated unusual encomiums from the Palace, called the executive's lack of cooperation for what it was: a "continuation of EO 464," meaning the Arroyo administration's efforts to limit appearances before congressional investigations.

"I hope that they would not use this to the hilt because otherwise it would destroy the system," Villar said. That system is nothing less than the organizing principle that gives structure to the Constitution: check and balance. In other words, what is at stake in this issue is not mere respect for the Senate, but the very idea of accountability. Public office is a public trust only to the extent that officeholders hold themselves accountable to the public.

Of course, if context is necessary to understand the true meaning behind Ermita's smooth statements, it is also crucial in determining the best time to conduct the inquiry.

It seems to us that Sen. Joker Arroyo's suggestion to his fellow senators strikes the right balance: Remain firm in demanding an accounting of the use of the funds, but first help speed up the evacuation. Specify the law at hand and list the questions, and then wait for the right time.

Estrada has criticized the ongoing evacuation as "piecemeal" and inadequate. "Is that because of lack of policy, lack of funds? These are the questions we have to answer." Important questions, so all the more reason for Estrada's committee to do its homework. It must not provide the artful dodgers in this administration even more room for evasive maneuvers.

Insulting Rolex

WHEN ILOILO REP. ROLEX SUPLICO FOUND A store in the upscale Ginza district of Tokyo selling Rolex watches at a 30 percent discount, he thought he should go in and buy **not one but two**—as his colleagues in the opposition might say—of the expensive watches. He wanted one for his daughter and another for his son; the discounted cost of the two watches was P296,000. "For the price of one, it was as if I was buying two," the impeachment leader told Congress reporters last Monday.

Well, not exactly. But the store declined his credit card, thinking it was stolen, and that's where Suplico's private anguish becomes a matter of public interest.

We have nothing against the rich buying what they think their children deserve, but we expect more of politicians who claim to occupy the moral high ground. The news about Suplico's conspicuous consumption (he ended up using another congressman's capacious credit card, to spend the equivalent of the **annual** salary of **two** public school teachers,**before tax**) makes us uncomfortable, but his reaction to the "humiliation" in Tokyo is downright disturbing.

"I was humiliated being told I was a criminal using a stolen card," he said, again not with the greatest precision. When he complained to the bank in Manila, he grew angrier when he realized his case was being treated as routine. "A bank vice president or higher officer should have talked to me," he said.

That, we suppose, is because he's with the minority. If he were with the party in power, we get this sense he'd ask for the bank president himself.

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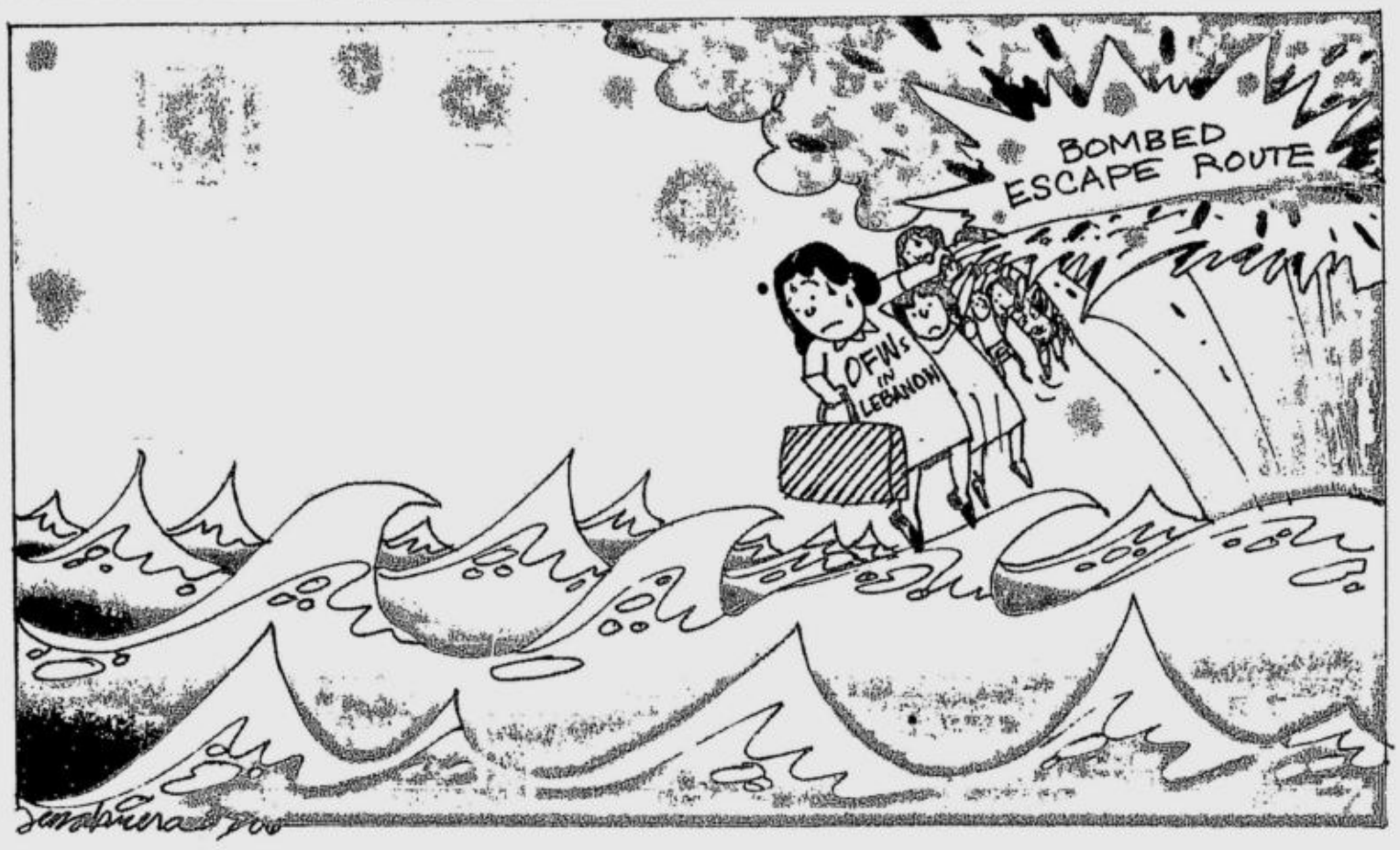

The Maysilo Estate land case

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

PROOF THAT THE WHEELS OF JUSTICE IN the Philippines are the slowest in the world is the land cases that take several generations to finish in the courts. Original claimants are long dead before a court case is decided, and it is his or her grandchildren and other heirs who continue the case.

One of the longest land cases on record is the ownership of the vast Maysilo Estate which covers a land area of 1,660 hectares in parts of Caloocan, Malabon, Valenzuela and Quezon City. The estate, which was previously owned by the family of Don Gonzalo Tuason y Patino was subdivided into five titles—OCTs 982, 983, 984, 985 and 994.

The present controversy, still under litigation, concerns only OCT 994, dated May 3, 1917, covering 1,342 hectares. The date has become the main issue in the controversy.

On July 3, 1917, the Court of First Instance of Rizal ordered the partition of the land covering OCT 994 among the 32 co-owners, two of whom were Jose Rato and Maria de la Concepcion Vidal.

The land acquired by Jose Rato was registered under TCT 8692 covering Lot 25-A-3 of the Maysilo Estate with an area of 1,174,468.90 square meters. Subsequently, TCT 21857 was issued in the name of Jose Rato covering the same area on May 23, 1932.

TCT 21857 was later subdivided into TCT 26538 (592,606.90 sq m) and TCT 26539 (581,872 sq m), both issued in the name of Jose Rato.

Later on, the Araneta Institute of Agriculture (AIA) acquired a portion of it—390,262 sq m—covered by TCT 26538. The same was registered under TCT (7784)-737 in the name of AIA. On the other hand, Victoneta Inc. acquired the land covered by TCT 26539, for which TCT 6196 was issued on Oct. 18, 1947 in favor of Victoneta.

Less than two years later, AIA acquired the land covered by TCT 6196 from Victoneta. On May 20, 1949, TCT 13574 was issued for that parcel of land in the name of AIA.

One of the original owners of Maysilo Estate under OCT 994 was the late Maria de la Concepcion Vidal. She was married to Pioquinto Rivera and had four children—Epifania, Pedro, Potenciana and Severo.

Epifania died in 1954 but left no children. Pedro had two daughters—Eleuteria and Teresa. Teresa is now deceased and is survived by children Pelagia, Modesta, Venancio, Felipe and Fidela, all surnamed Angeles.

Potenciana is survived by three children—Josefa, Gregorio and Rosuaro, all surnamed Aquino.

Severo died sometime in 1907 and is survived by his son Bartolome Rivera, whose mother was Luisa Pinangyarihan.

On Sept. 30, 1960, Bartolome Rivera and lawyer Jose Dimson entered into an agreement wherein the former assigned to the latter 25 percent of the total land area of Lot Nos. 25, 26, 27, 28-B and 29 as attorney's fees.

On June 13, 1966, the Pasig CFI, through Judge Cecilia Muñoz-Palma, approved the Deed of Conveyance to Jose Dimson of the 25 percent of whatever Bartolome Rivera was entitled to under Lots 25, 26, 27, 28-B and 29 from OCT 994. The surviving heirs of Maria de la Concepcion Vidal asked a Caloocan court to partition their shares under OCT 994 which the court approved on Dec. 29, 1965.

But in an order dated Aug. 16, 1966, Judge Palma denied Dimson's motion to award him the 25 percent share because there was no more portion left to be given to Dimson. In their opposition to Dimson's motion, the heirs led by Victoria Rivera said that whatever portions of the property covered by OCT 994 which had not been disposed of by the previous owners had already been assigned and adjudicated to Bartolome Rivera and his assignees.

Eleven years later, Dimson filed a case before the Caloocan CFI to confirm the order of confirmation of Pasig Judge Palma without however presenting the Aug. 16, 1966 order dismissing his motion for the awarding of his share of the property.

Lawyers say that Dimson's case was filed in the wrong court since his action was essentially an enforcement of an order which was issued by a Pasig judge. The case should have been filed before Judge Palma.

But on Oct. 18, 1977, Caloocan City Judge Marcelino Sayo granted Dimson's petition despite the fact that he never presented the original copy of OCT 994 and a subdivision plan duly approved by the Bureau of Lands or the LRA, and ordered separate TCTs for Lots 25-A-1, 25-A-2, 26 and 28 in the name of Dimson.

With titles now in his name for a portion of the Maysilo Estate, Dimson then filed an action for recovery of possession with damages and annulment of TCTs against AIA, claiming that the latter's TCT overlapped a portion of his property.

The Caloocan RTC upheld Dimson's claims and ordered AIA to vacate the property overlapped. The Court of Appeals upheld the findings of the lower court.

AIA then filed a motion for reconsideration. The Department of Justice and the Senate, in separate reports, affirmed AIA's contention that OCT 994 was issued on May 3, 1917 by the Register of Deeds by virtue of Decree 36455 issued on April 19, 1917 in Land Registration Case 4429. AIA then filed a motion for reconsideration and/or new trial based on newly discovered evidence (the DOJ and Senate reports).

On Aug. 5, 1998, the CA denied AIA's motion, relying mainly on the decision of the Supreme Court in Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System vs. CA (215 SCRA 783) and Heirs of Gonzaga vs. CA (261 SCRA 327).

AIA then appealed the CA ruling to the Supreme Court on Aug. 5, 1998. On Nov. 5, 2005, the Supreme Court dismissed AIA's petition.

(To be continued)

Close-open

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S ANOTHER CASE THAT INVOLVES cheating in this country of liars and cheaters. It was brought to my attention recently by some friends of mine. It's a weird turn of events that threatens the integrity of the Supreme Court itself if the weird turn isn't stopped dead in its tracks. I was about to say, such as there's integrity left in the Supreme Court, but that institution has redeemed itself of late with remarkable, and quite unexpected, universal condemnation of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's dictatorial drift.

But enough of the mystery. The case concerns the ownership of a 34-hectare property in Quezon City, beside Ayala Heights. On June 24, 1998, the Land Registration Authority ruled that the tract of land belonged to Homer Barque and his heirs and not to Severino Manotok and family who had been laying claim to it. Indeed, the LRA found that the Manotoks' title was "sham and spurious."

The case found its way to the Court of Appeals for adjudication. And the Court of Appeals likewise affirmed in full the findings of the LRA. It reiterated that the title held by the Manotoks was "sham and spurious" and the Barques' title, as held by heir Teresita Barque Hernandez, "genuine, authentic and existing."

The Manotoks brought their case to the Supreme Court and once again the Supreme Court, in the form of the Special First Division, upheld the LRA and Court of Appeals. In its Dec. 12, 2005 ruling, the Court affirmed that the property belonged to the Barques. The lawyers of the Manotoks filed a couple of motions for reconsideration but they were denied by the Supreme Court. In its June 19, 2006 resolution, the Court trenchantly said: "The Second Motion for Reconsideration is prohibited pleading ... In addition, petitioners failed to cite any compelling reason why this Court should disregard the above rules but merely reiterated the very same grounds relied upon in their First Motion for Reconsideration .... No further pleadings will be entertained. Let entry of judgment be issued."

It's easy to see why the LRA, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court had no trouble in ruling on the case. The documents possessed by the Barques are ironclad while those possessed by the Manotoks are, well, to quote the LRA and the courts, sham and spurious. The Manotoks' title cannot even accurately pinpoint the location of the land, and their Deeds of Conveyance dated 1974 were notarized by a notary public who, according to the Manila RTC clerk of court, "has not submitted his notarial report for the whole year of 1974 up to the whole year of 1976."

So one would think that all's well that ends well, an attempt at claiming another's property is happily foiled, something that doesn't always end this way in this country. But now comes the strange part, or the weird twist. This has come in the form of two things, both attempting to open with chicanery what justice has shut.

One is an attempt by people in media to discredit the current owner, Teresita Barque Hernandez. Hernandez has been accused of being too impoverished—she is a college teacher—to possibly own such a tract of land. She apparently does not have a tax account number and is merely renting the place she is currently living in.

Two, and more insidiously, is the attempt by former Justice Florentino Feliciano to reopen the case through the backdoor by writing the Chief Justice et al., pleading for the case to be reopened with the Supreme Court sitting en banc—that is, with all the justices present and not just those of the First Division. His arguments rehash the same arguments in the failed motions for reconsideration.

The first is plain wrong, and not a little idiotic. The plain wrong, Hernandez has proven with something whose importance her detractors can't seem to comprehend, which is documents. She does have a *cedula* and tax account number, she does own the property she lives in, and she does run small businesses. And yes, she was a college instructor in various schools from 1969 to 1990.

What makes the argument idiotic is that it in fact clinches the case for, and not against, Hernandez. If she isn't rich, then clearly she had no money to help the LRA, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court see things her way, as the rich in this country are wont to do. If she won the case, it could only have been because the evidence was so glaring even the cynical and corrupt would have balked at trying to twist it. By contrast, all that the opposite idea—that the Manotoks are people of means—suggests is not that they own the property but that they have the means to persuade people in media (I refuse to say journalists) to preach so.

The second has no place in anything remotely to do with law, and it is breathtaking that any lawyer, let alone a former justice, would attempt it. It violates ethics, etiquette and just plain decency. The rules of the Court are clear: You may plead for the Supreme Court to sit on a case en banc rather than just as a division only **before** any division rules on the case. Not after. Otherwise no case ever gets done. Otherwise you make a travesty of the words, "final and executory." That was why the Court threw away the earlier pleadings for reconsideration: They are, to use its own words, "prohibited pleadings."

What madness persuaded Feliciano to go against the very things he was sworn to uphold not too long ago, I leave him to say. "Older and wiser" is not a phrase that seems to apply to the people of this country. Will his former fellows in the Supreme Court go along with him? Well, if they do, I will have only one advice to give readers thenceforth, which is that they take either to the hills or abroad, Jovito Palparan and Lebanon notwithstanding.

They will find neither justice nor a future here.

Understanding the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict

SOUNDING BOARD

Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas, S.J.

FRANKLY, I CANNOT CLAIM THAT I TRULY understand it. Let me nevertheless share with my readers what I have come to think about it even as it is only now that I have begun to pay attention to it.

One thing is certain: the conflict did not begin with the kidnapping by the Hezbollah of two Israeli soldiers last July 12. It is part of a long history of two neighbors hating each other. But the kidnapping of the Israeli reservists may have served as the immediate trigger for the fighting to begin in earnest.

It is said that the Hezbollah attack on the Israeli patrol was named "Operation Truthful Promise" because the Hezbollah leader Sayyid Hassan Nasrallah had promised to capture Israeli soldiers and swap them for Lebanese prisoners held by Israel. A Hezbollah statement was quoted as saying: "Implementing our promise to free Arab prisoners in Israeli jails, our strugglers have captured two Israeli soldiers in Southern Lebanon." Later the leader Nasrallah would say: "No military operation will return them ... The prisoners will not be returned except through one way: indirect negotiations and a trade of prisoners."

Israel's response has been an unrelenting series of bombing raids intended to eliminate Hezbollah's capacity to fight or to harass Israeli villages. But this is not happening. Hezbollah continues to send rockets flying into Israel.

Those who know the history of the warring states recall earlier encounters. In 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon to dislodge the Palestine Liberation Organization from Beirut. For 18 years Israel occupied south Lebanon, withdrawing only in 2000. In 1993 Israel invaded Lebanon in what was called "Operation Accountability," a week-long attack against Lebanon meant to pressure the Lebanese government to intervene against Hezbollah; and in 1996, it launched what was code-named "Operation Grapes of Wrath," a 16-day military blitz against Lebanon in an attempt to crush the Lebanese resistance to Israel's occupation of south Lebanon.

Observers also say that both sides had long been preparing for this conflict—Hezbollah by building up its rocket arsenal, and Israel by escalating its own war capability—and that the kidnapping of the two Israeli soldiers was not so much a provocation as a pretext for starting a combat which both sides were eager to start.

What has been the result so far?

When you start counting the victims on both sides, they are mainly helpless civilians, the bigger number of them innocent Lebanese. (Providentially, Filipino workers in Lebanon have so far been spared.) But when you look at the pictures on television, you see south Lebanon reduced to a deserted wasteland over which are scattered craters, ruined buildings and smashed vehicles. It was reported that a third of the Lebanese victims are children and the Lebanese prime minister was quoted as plaintively asking, "Is the value of human life less in Lebanon than that of citizens elsewhere? Are we children of a lesser god? Is an Israeli teardrop more valuable than a drop of Lebanese blood?" Meanwhile, the United States has resisted pressure to push for an immediate truce.

The Israeli strategy calls to mind the atrocities in Bosnia. In Bosnia, the destruction of villages and the mass annihilation of civilian populations were called genocide! We seem to have something similar here, but Israel is calling it nothing more than the creation of a buffer zone for the protection of northern Israel.

The rules of war require that disproportionate force must not be used. Nations have warned Israel against the use of disproportionate force. But the Israeli ambassador to the UN had a terse reply: "To those countries who claim we are using disproportionate force, I have only this to say: you're damn right we are!" The Israeli strategy is that the task should not be left unfinished. In fact, Israel has warned that everyone remaining in south Lebanon will be regarded as terrorists. Tactically, too, the Israeli air force flattens villages before Israeli ground troops move in, to protect the latter.

An editorial in the Jesuit-run America magazine concludes thus:

"The strategy of going after Hezbollah by attacking Lebanon is a return to Bush II illusions about remaking the Middle East by armed force. Lebanon was one country in the region where democracy had begun to take a fragile hold. The Cedar Revolution was the poster child of Arab democratic renewal. The Israeli assault and US acquiescence to the Israeli strategy [have] severely undermined the Lebanese state along with chances of democracy elsewhere in the region. It has weakened the hand of moderate Arab forces generally and strengthened that of the Islamic militants, including Iran's theocratic government.

"Christians, and Catholics in particular, have reason for acute concern, because Lebanon has been the last country in the Middle East where Christians play a significant role in society. The Lebanese experiment in multi-religious co-existence, what the Lebanese call 'conviviality,' a promising alternative to government by the mullahs, has been dealt a crippling blow. The weakening of Lebanon means fading possibilities not only for Middle Eastern Christianity but also for interreligious coexistence. The days when the Maronites could retreat to Mount Lebanon are past. The current crisis calls for American and other Western Christians to defend Lebanon and its Christians with the strongest expressions of solidarity."

Winning the war vs homelessness

COMMENTARY

Anna Marie Karaos and Junefe Gilig Payot
Institute on Church and Social Issues

VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO, AS HEAD OF THE Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC), came out with an advertisement titled "Sustaining the War Against Homelessness" in the INQUIRER. It boasted of the government's accomplishments in housing. But on closer examination, the figures are not as impressive as they seem.

For starters, it is doubtful that the 200,000 families—which the ad claimed have been "empowered" through the Presidential Proclamations Program—feel that much has changed with their lives. Under the program, government-owned lands are declared socialized housing sites to be distributed to their urban poor occupants.

Empowerment can come with security of tenure, but the latter can only be had when families get their certificates of entitlement for lot allocation (CELA). So far, only about 14,000 families have been awarded their CELAs. This accomplishment covers a five-year period starting in 2001.

Second, the Community Mortgage Program (CMP), which gives housing loans to urban poor communities, may have met its annual target of 15,000 families a year. But the target is set at a very low level. The program's accomplishment—it assisted 70,000 families in five years—has very little impact on the enormous housing need of the country.

Third, the relocation of 40,000 families, although it provides security of tenure as the ad claims, may have actually resulted in the reduced well-being for many families who lost their sources of income as a result of the transfer. The inadequacy of basic services in the resettlement sites has also left many families feeling worse off now than before.

What are the reasons behind this lackluster performance?

The HUDCC should act more decisively in pushing for the distribution of the proclaimed lands. On the other hand, the National Housing Authority, which administers 42 of the 94 sites proclaimed so far, faults the absence of a budget for the slow disposition of the lands.

The fact that there have been fewer new proclamations in the past two years compared to the first three years of President Macapagal-Arroyo's presidency, indicates the waning interest of the political leadership to cater to the expectations of the urban poor. It will be recalled that the so-called "Edsa III" assault on Malacañang in 2001, which was identified with the urban poor, was a threat that the newly installed Arroyo administration did not take lightly.

In previous years, the en banc meetings of the National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), presided over by the President, were an effective venue for pressuring government agencies to agree to the disposition of the lands they owned for social housing. During her second term, the President has not convened the NAPC en banc because the representatives of the basic sectors have not been appointed. And why has the President delayed their appointment?

It is believed that many of the nominees for the NAPC's sectoral representatives are identified with groups that supported the impeachment move against the President last year. Under the NAPC law, the President can appoint the sectoral commissioners only from the list of nominees submitted by the respective sectoral councils. Since her choices are limited to people she perceives are not her supporters, she has chosen not to make any appointments, in effect demobilizing the NAPC as a mechanism for basic sector participation.

As for the problems faced in the relocation projects, the main reason for these is the failure to program resettlement requirements in advance. For instance, in the case of the NorthRail, the communities were allowed to participate in the search for relocation sites, which was a good thing. But because the decision came late, the transfer of the families had to be rushed; and it was done before the resettlement sites could be fully equipped with the necessary basic services.

The low output of the CMP, on the other hand, is attributed by the Social Housing Finance Corp. (SHFC) to low budgetary support. But NGOs have complained that the SHFC has available funds which it is investing to earn income for the agency instead of making these available for CMP loans. The SHFC has countered with the claim that the program's low output is due to the applicant communities' slow compliance with the loan requirements.

So what should be done?

First of all, housing targets must be formulated with a view to reducing the housing backlog. As it is, the government is only targeting to deliver 1.4 million units from 2005 to 2010 vis-à-vis an expected housing need of 3.7 million units for the same period. The private sector can hardly be expected to supply the balance especially since the bulk of the demand for housing comes from low-income families who are not its market.

Thus, it is suggested that the targets of the CMP, the Presidential Proclamations and slum upgrading be increased by at least a hundred percent. In addition, the SHFC must devise new programs catering to a greater number of homeless families that may be ineligible or unable to access the CMP.

With respect to the proclamations, the implementing rules and regulations for the disposition of the proclaimed sites must be issued, and participation of the concerned communities must be ensured in the local inter-agency committees overseeing the land distribution. The NHA should be allocated a reasonable budget to proceed with the disposition of the lands.

As for resettlement, the development of the sites should be programmed well in advance. Adequate funding must also be given not just for site development and housing but for basic social services—like education, health services and livelihood. In addition, the National Economic and Development Authority must make sure that all infrastructure projects have a resettlement plan with an adequate budget even before they are approved.

Finally, money is needed to make all this possible. If the government is indeed serious about meeting the housing need, it must put its money where its mouth is. President Arroyo said in her Sona that funds are now available "to address social inequity and economic disparity." What can be a clearer symptom and effect of social inequity than homelessness?

Only then will the "War Against Homelessness" be truly won.

The Institute on Church and Social Issues is a policy research and advocacy center of the Philippine Province of the Society of Jesus. E-mail address: icsi@admu.edu.ph

State of the Enchanted Kingdom (SEK 2007)

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Noralyn Mustafa

IN HER LATEST STATE OF THE NATION Address, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo did not tell us the state of the nation. What she revealed was her state of mind.

What was most worrisome was her deafening silence on three very crucial concerns—foreign policy, social development and education.

Her foreign policy is strictly mendicant, servile and mercantile: give me this and give me that, invest in our country and I will send you our "new product" (to quote her chief statistician Joey Salceda)—surprise—supermaids! They are called supermaids, not the slaves that they really are, because they can run faster during air strikes and they fall quicker from balconies when they run away from inhuman masters. *O, bongga, di ba?*

In social development, there is no need for an anti-abortion law because infants die like flies from severe malnutrition anyway. No need for a divorce law and population control because we ship the women away along with their ovaries, to cook and clean and care for other people's children, *abroad pa!*

And there's no need for the death penalty because we do it quicker. We kill them. Especially journalists and activists and desperate farmers. Or make them disappear like magic. Those we cannot kill, we lock up, like deposed President Estrada and the best and brightest in the military service.

In education, we have solved the problem of classroom shortage with a trick so quick and easy, slowpoke Fe failed to catch it. We simply doubled the number of classrooms through double shifts. Elementary, my dear Ms Hidalgo.

We are now revising the curriculum to get rid of the intellectual underpinnings of all civilized societies, liberal education. That useless field of knowledge will be replaced by curricula to produce only the top dollar-earners—nurses, caregivers and telemarketers who receive less than a fifth of the compensation their American counterparts get—then in five years' time, our streets will be peopled by nightwalkers with body clocks running on reverse.

For those who cannot afford that kind of education, no problem. As long as they attain the intellectual level needed to fathom the profundity of the title of Mikey Arroyo's film phenomenon "A.B. Normal," they'll be good enough to sign up for the "people's initiative."

And so while our inventors, techies, artists, singers, performers, actors, filmmakers, whiz kids and even ice skaters were winning accolades and awards left and right from the rest of the world, look whom she presented as the best of the best during her Sona. Someone who bested them all—a multi-talented boxing champ who sings and acts, also a commercial model who has cornered the juiciest ad contracts (I saw Rajah Sikatuna turning in his grave over and over, it made me dizzy); and a beauty queen to entice those loaded DOMs to visit the country where there are more beauties where she comes from.

But Ms Arroyo should at least be given credit for the most innovative presidency—video governance. Off cam, she delves into the wide wonderful world of cyberspace through her ever-present laptop. It's on her lap everywhere she goes, even when she's in the hospital.

Last time she got sick overdoing her job as receptionist for homecoming OFWs who had escaped death and slavery in Lebanon, she was tinkering with the PowerPoint presentation of her enchanted kingdom, the "megaregions" that would chop up the country into cheap labor camps for foreign capital in agriculture, agribusiness, tourism and cyberspace. That must have been before she went into a drug-induced stupor.

And when she woke up, while our countrywomen were jumping from balconies and dodging bombs in Lebanon, and whole towns were drowning in floods, and volcanoes were threatening to erupt, the first thing she asked about was the state of the stock market.

And so this is the fearless forecast for the state of the nation a year hence: a house with no windows and no doors in the killing fields of the Gulag Archipelago.

In the meantime, we're sick and tired of this guessing-game: Is she or isn't she a fraud? When will Garci squeal? Will Joc-joc get a green card? Who is the real Jose Pidal? Did P700 million melt into bottles of cheap liquid fertilizer? Did rice grow in Makati? Where did the billions of pesos of the "new heroes"—now called "new products"—go?

And as the world is rushing headlong into the age-old irreconcilable polarity of the cross and the crescent, and oil reserves have replaced territory as the prime spoils of war, and spy planes hover nightly till dawn over this island of terrorists, Ms Arroyo taunts the opposition about picking up old fights. It's all in the game, you see.

Are Khadafy and Dulmatin really here in Jolo? Or is it the same optical illusion that transferred Radulan's amputated arm from right to left?

Washington, we're in deep s—t. Get rid of her, quick, and let the legitimate president, Joseph Ejercito Estrada, resume his presidency in a peaceful manner, before the al-Qaida beats you to it.

Word is—please trust me on this—she better leave because she is a time bomb ticking away. With her recent appointments in the military, there will not be enough water in the Rio Grande de Mindanao to dilute the blood that will flow from innocent civilians who must be killed in her service to George Bush.

Osama bin Laden is the descendant of Sultan Aghimud-Din, the Iraqi who was the 12th sultan of Sulu.

And don't bother towing in those container vans. Remember, 9/11 didn't come knocking at the front gate of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue.

* * *

Comments to rubaiyat19@yahoo.com

Presumptuous legality

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

I ONCE ASKED THE SOLICITOR GENERAL AND the justice secretary for opinions on the validity of a provision of a law. The law, passed by Congress in 1998, modified the coat-of-arms of our Republic. The National Historical Institute was hellbent on implementing that modification which, if seriously carried out, would have involved millions of pesos in expenses (covering the signs of embassies, most government forms, etc.). But the Constitution specifically says that any change in our national coat-of-arms required the people's approval in a plebiscite. Hence, the need for a clarification: was the NHI authorized to implement something not approved in a referendum?

The solicitor general, quite learnedly, pointed to discussions in the Constitutional Commission and the Constitution itself, that the NHI was wrong and I was right. The justice secretary opined that Congress' and the executive's actions enjoyed the "presumption of legality," and that since the law was there, it was in force. End result: an impasse. Which, ever since, made me skeptical of the argument that official actions should enjoy such a privilege. Only the Department of Justice could set aside a constitutional provision as clear as day for the murky convenience of simply letting things slide.

Rep. Luis Villafuerte is like the justice secretary. He insists on the presumption of legality in what the House does. Who can forget his merry jiggling and rambunctious rumbling during last year's House hearings on the impeachment complaints against President Macapagal-Arroyo? At the time, he proclaimed the whole thing a triumph of representative democracy, of due process, of the rule of law and possibly even of the stimulating qualities of caffeine. He and his party mates, coalition allies and so forth, did their job—and did them well, he said. But the distinguished gentleman from Camarines Sur now denies the presumption of legality in favor of citizens who don't share his puppy dog devotion to the Palace. Perhaps, his exclusionary beliefs are based on the presumptuous belief that the citizenry is inferior to his exalted, fellow representatives.

I'm certain Villafuerte would thunder and shrill were any citizen to pester him on whether he actually prepared his statement of assets and liabilities, or God forbid, if its contents were indeed truthful to the last centavo. He would be equally pained to be challenged as to whether or not he read every bill he sponsored or claimed to have co-authored; or every committee report filed with his signature. Never mind the manner he spent and accounted for the congressional funds disbursed to him. Who knows? Perhaps in his case, everything is strictly on the up-and-up; but surely not even he could be sure the same applied to each and every one of his colleagues.

Thing is, he's assured of the presumption of legality for the acts of commission or omission surrounding his official business. Who can challenge him? None of his colleagues can, out of parliamentary courtesy. Media, perhaps? But for all his girth, he is a piddling congressman, newsworthy only when jibber-jabbering on behalf of his principal. His constituents? But he can surely lard them into submission—and silence. Any other citizen, then? What? The nerve!

Villafuerte says that citizens who have filed impeachment charges against his patroness have been making dishonest statements. The impeachment complaints are accompanied by certifications, made under oath, attesting to the fact that the complainants caused their preparation and, furthermore, have full knowledge of the charges. Logically, Villafuerte should ask whether the representatives who've endorsed the complaints can attest to the veracity of their contents: but as I said, parliamentary courtesy demands that he should presume good faith on the part of his colleagues.

But that's as far as Villafuerte's kindness extends. He wants to know: Which came first, the complainants or their proposed case? And then he wants to know if every single allegation is substantiated by direct and personal knowledge of the particulars that flesh out the charges. In essence, the letter, never mind the spirit, of the law must prevail! That was the legal strategy of Villafuerte and his league of distinguished public servants last year. It is the same strategy this year. If the strategy ain't broke, don't fix it.

Actually, Villafuerte could be setting himself up for a fall, if he really intended to ask such questions. He could be told, one by one, by hundreds—thousands!—of Filipinos that yes, they have been meeting and discussing the disgraceful conduct of the House last year, and that they believe impeachment should be pursued again. They could tell him how the proposed charges were conscientiously and thoroughly discussed, reviewed and written. And by all means, let us give concerned citizens the chance to detail how they came to believe that Ms Arroyo should be held to account for her actions since June of last year and even before. Direct and personal knowledge of the charges? You bet! Let us count the ways ... and the counting of the ways won't be done Garci-style, either.

It's all a farce, though, because the learned gentleman from Camarines Sur has an objective in mind, and it's this: "The emerging consensus of most of the members of the committee is that we have to cut short the proceeding .... Probably, it would be terminated in an earlier date," Villafuerte said. So, in fact, he doesn't want to find out what the impeachment proponents did, or what they know; he's simply looking for a way out. The plain fact of the matter is that as far as he's concerned, on Aug. 8 or 9, he hopes the impeachment goose is cooked.

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PHILIPPINE LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

PRC: a gov't system that doesn't work

THIS IS A REACTION TO THE CONTROVERSIES now plaguing the Professional Regulatory Commission and the review centers around the country.

I have doubts about the effectivity of the board exams and a professional license to gauge a person's ability to apply in practical work environments what he has learned in school . Come to think of it, a student spends years to finish a course. But board exams can't cover every topic studied in all those college years. Yet, board exams seem to be regarded as the only way graduates can be tested as true professionals—by the standards of people who don't seem to have the faintest idea what it took the graduates to get to where they are today.

How could a few hundred questions disqualify a student from getting a professional license—this after he/she had spent years in college answering thousands of questions, not to mention the additional thousands of other requirements he/she had to comply with? But all of these ideas are nothing compared to the biggest folly in the PRC exams: money.

One issue about money is the sudden increase in the registration fee for the exams. The PRC now charges close to a thousand pesos for registration; this is about P300 higher than the registration fee a few years back. Yet, according to first-hand account, the PRC system hasn't changed a bit—it uses the same exam materials, the same number of proctors and the same inadequate facilities. And don't tell me that the cost of the cardboard used for the exams has suddenly gone up. I know the PRC might have raised the fee for the sake of the public school teachers volunteering as proctors. I have no objection to that, provided the bulk of the fee really goes to them.

Another issue involves the review centers. I didn't have much money to study in a review center. This is the reason I had to review on my own and to rely on some handouts from friends. But why should review centers make money just because they probably know what questions might come out? It's like playing a sick form of lottery: the review center that gets the most number of "right questions" wins bragging rights and probably gets to produce the biggest number of topnotchers. Meanwhile, the PRC comes up with questions that are out-of this world, except, of course, to the review centers that can pay the right price.

I mean, must a graduate pay so much just so the PRC can have the chance to tell him/her that he/she is inadequate to become a professional engineer? And that's just for engineers. How about the thousands of other people paying fees just so they can take the licensure exams for nursing? Basically the loss of thousands of Filipinos is the gain of a government system that simply doesn't work.

—CHRISTOPHER CASTRO,
Baguio City

RP can become Asia's mecca for ecotourism

WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE GREG BLOOM'S observations regarding the state of tourism in the Philippines and the country's potential of becoming Asia's mecca for ecotourism and adventure tourism. (PDI, 7/1/06)

We thank Lonely Planet Philippines for featuring the various attractions in our country, including those that are not so well-known.

We are aware of our shortcomings, as Bloom pointed out. But, we have begun to address these concerns. We have, for instance, initiated an annual adventure race, dubbed the Island Paradise Adventure Race (IPAR), designed to raise broad awareness of the less-traveled destinations in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, especially among potential local and foreign tourists; at the same time, to encourage Filipinos to welcome tourists.

IPAR has, since its launching in May 2005, been one of the tools employed by the Department of Tourism in marketing the Philippines as a "fun and 'in' place" to visit for all types of people. The first two IPAR races covered Northern Luzon (in May 2005) and Southern Luzon-Visayas (in December 2005). The third race will be in Mindanao.

We, at the DOT, under the effective leadership of Secretary Joseph "Ace" H. Durano, have also encouraged all steps to promote ecotourism and other activities highlighting the uniqueness of the Philippines as a tourist paradise in Southeast Asia.

As in other products conceptualized and launched by the DOT, we are hopeful that IPAR, or other adventure activities, will eventually be taken over and managed by the private sector.

As a matter of policy and in concurrence with existing laws, the DOT closely coordinates with local government units and the tourism industry's stakeholders in the formulation and conceptualization of projects and activities designed to attract more visitors to our shores.

Like Bloom, we believe that the Philippines is one of Asia's "True Paradise." We hope, and will endeavor, to share with all the peoples of the world the true beauty of the Philippines.

—SHAHLIMAR H. TAMANO,
project director, Department of Tourism-Island Paradise Adventure Race,
TM Kalaw Street, Rizal Park, Manila

Unprofessional behavior of MRT drivers

I TAKE THE MRT TRAIN EVERY DAY AND I would like to call attention to the unprofessional conduct of some MRT drivers. I think their behavior reflects on the Department of Transportation and Communications' and the MRT management's general efficiency and attitude toward public service.

1. Many drivers are not in proper uniform and are not well-groomed. They are usually clad in T-shirts (some even colored and printed) and do not wear their *polo barong*; instead, they hang it on the back seat of the driver's seat. Some drivers are even in civilian clothes. Isn't there a dress code for train drivers and DOTC employees? Some of them are also unkempt—their hair is long and they sport a beard or mustache.

2. In one trip, the driver kept the door of the cockpit open and let a female passenger stay inside it (maybe she was his girlfriend or he just wanted to show off his driving skills) from North Avenue to Magallanes station.

3. Once the MRT bogged down and we were stranded at the Cubao station for about an hour. When the trains resumed operation, hundreds of people had gathered on the platform. Because the trains were already full of passengers when they arrived in Cubao, people became more frustrated and angry.

The MRT announced that it would send an empty train shortly. When it finally arrived, it moved very slowly as it approached the platform. All the while, the driver and another man inside the cockpit were laughing, as if taunting the passengers who were already late for work.

What kind of training does the DOTC give MRT drivers? Whatever it is, it's not effective. The drivers are uncaring and unprofessional. If they think horsing around is OK while they do their duties, they should be booted out. The DOTC and the MRT management should not wait for an accident to happen as a result of the train drivers' unprofessional conduct.

—BARBARA GUALVEZ,
gbarbara@mail.pids.gov.ph

GSIS eCard to carry pensions in 2007 yet

WE WRITE IN RESPONSE TO SONIA N. ALFABETO'S letter, "Is GSIS helping or punishing retirees?" (PDI, 8/1/06)

We thank Alfabeto for appreciating the benefits that electronic crediting of monthly pensions to the GSIS eCard will bring her. However, we also would like to formally inform her that the Government Service Insurance System never said—as it has never been its intent—that monthly pensions shall immediately be credited to the pensioners' accounts upon issuance of their eCard. In fact, the GSIS has instructed our field personnel to advise our pensioners (before the eCards are released to them) that they will continue receiving their monthly checks until their pensions and loans shall have been credited to their eCards, starting January 2007.

The GSIS launched the eCard program precisely to eliminate the long waiting time for clearing pension checks. However, since we are still completing the eCard rollout for all our pensioners nationwide, we cannot as yet activate the electronic crediting of their pensions. For this, we humbly ask Alfabeto and our dear retirees to please bear with us.

—ENRIQUETA P. DISUANCO,
EVP-operations,
Government Service Insurance System,
GSIS Financial Center, Reclamation Area,
Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City

How to be a good chief

IF I WERE PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO, I would divide our country into five eco-zones:

1. Blue zones—clean seas and rivers where fishing is allowed.

2. Green zones—good lands and mountains where mining and farming may be permitted.

3. Brown zones—bad lands and denuded mountains where rehabilitation should be undertaken.

4. Black zones—polluted seas and rivers where rehabilitation should be done.

5. White zones—areas where no exploitation must be allowed (no need for rehabilitation).

If faithfully and sincerely observed, then President Arroyo may yet be a good President.

—DAN PASIA,
962 Tolentino St.,
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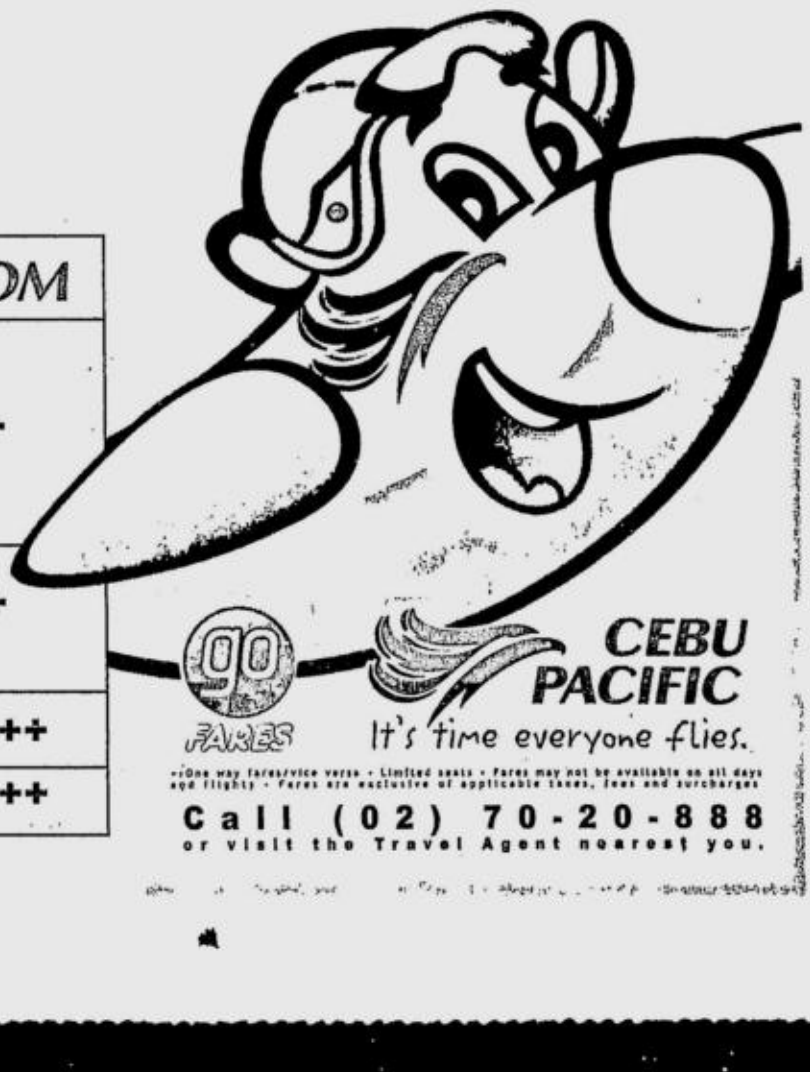

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Poro Point barricaded

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—THE CARGO VESSEL OPERATIONS at the Poro Point in San Fernando City in La Union were paralyzed after the port operator barricaded the port area and refused to allow cargo vessels to unload at the pier on Saturday night.

The Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC) also stopped officials of the Philippine Ports Authority, who were ordered to take over the operations of the company by Transportation and Communication Secretary Leandro Mendoza, from entering the facility.

Silverio Mangaoang Jr., a PPA port manager assigned in Poro Point, said he received a memorandum from Mendoza on Saturday ordering the PPA to take over the PPIC's cargo handling operations at the Poro Point, including stevedoring, arrastre and special services like bagging, trucking and berth management.

Earlier, the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC) issued the PPIC a cease-and-desist order on its services.

Mangaoang said the PPIC has no environmental compliance certificate (ECC) from the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and has violated terms in its management contract.

"We were met with physical resistance when we tried to enter the port's premises. Barricades were put up by security and other personnel of the PPIC," Mangaoang told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview on Sunday.

The PPA sought the help of the La Union police and the Philippine Coast Guard to enforce Mendoza's order.

Mangaoang said four cargo vessels, two of which were loaded with materials used in manufacturing fertilizer, and some smaller vessels were at the dock.

Barricades

The vessels could not unload while the smaller ones could not load from their warehouses because the pier's gates were barricaded with payloaders and heavy equipment, he said.

Mangaoang said businessmen handling the cargoes were already "impatient" due to the standoff because they have to pay P9,000 a day while at the anchorage plus detention fees.

"Besides, the consignees are already waiting," he said.

Mangaoang said the PPA will manage the pier's operations on a temporary basis and the PPMC will contract out the operations to another company.

"The workers of the PPIC will not be displaced as they will be absorbed by the new company," he said.

PPIC lawyer Brigido Dulay said their firm would sue officials of the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) and its subsidiary, the PPMC, following the attempted takeover of PPIC's operations.

Dulay said the PPMC and PPA personnel who tried taking over the PPIC's operations were armed and "had reportedly acted on the request of the BCDA leadership."

Mangaong denied that PPA and PPMC personnel were armed. He said policemen and Philippine Coast Guard personnel who accompanied their team were the ones carrying their firearms.

Dulay said the Poro Point seaport is the object of a legal case filed by PPIC against the BCDA and PPMC. The suit stemmed from a board resolution passed by PPMC that sought to pave the way for a takeover of the facility.

Dulay said the regional trial court in San Fernando City issued an injunction last month preventing the BCDA and PPMC from implementing its takeover resolution.

Agreements

He said the court ordered the agencies to observe the terms and conditions of the earlier agreements signed between PPIC and the BCDA.

"The BCDA and PPMC should be reminded that there is an existing injunction from the court ordering them to maintain the status quo," Dulay said in the statement.

PPIC president Emmanuel Moran said in the same statement that the PPA had apparently acted on the basis of a letter from the DENR asking the PPIC to explain the alleged absence of an ECC for the Poro Point Port.

Moran said the DENR letter "definitely does not give BCDA and PPMC a legal basis with which to take over the port."

"We are confident that we have complied with the DENR requirements so BCDA and PPMC should not try to use this issue as an excuse," he said.

BCDA president Narciso Abaya, in a telephone interview yesterday, said the takeover was proper because the PPIC committed "serious environmental violations" and failed to secure an ECC since it operated in 1999.

He said Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes also issued a cease-and-desist order on PPIC's operations on Friday.

Abaya said Reyes' order showed that the firm has been discharging human and industrial wastes into the waters around the Port of San Fernando. *With reports from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

CHR probes alleged torture of Iloilo farmers

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—THE COMMISSION on Human Rights is investigating the torture of farmers allegedly by soldiers in Calinog town in Iloilo.

Joemele Pagtanac, investigator of the CHR regional office, said he had already interviewed five of the seven complainants who had earlier executed affidavits accusing members of the Army's Scout Rangers and Task Force Panay (TFP) of beating them while under detention on July 12-13.

The farmers, all residents of the hinterland villages of Masaroy and Wright, said they were being forced to admit that they were members of the communist New People's Army (NPA).

Maj. Lyndon Sollesta, spokesperson of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, has said the soldiers conducted a legitimate operation in the villages but denied that they had beaten up any of the residents.

He said the Task Force would also conduct its own investigation.

Loreto Duerme Jr., his father Loreto Sr., brother Naldo, brother-in-law Eddie Katipunan and Jimmy Chiva affirmed their statements and provided more details of the charges, said Pagtanac.

The CHR official said he had also interviewed and received the statement of another alleged victim, Ian Castor. The seventh, Filomeno Billote, was too sick to go to the town proper of Calinog, 59.3 km north of this city, village officials earlier said.

Masaroy barangay chair Romeo Diaz and Councilor Roger Diaz also gave testimony.

Loreto Duerme Jr. claimed that he was kicked in the belly and repeatedly punched. He said he was gasping for breath when his captors covered his head with a plastic bag.

The complainants said that except for an Army patch, the soldiers bore no name patches and insignia of their unit in their uniforms. But barangay officials said the Scout Rangers were the only Army soldiers assigned in the area.

Pagtanac said he would get the sides of the Scout Rangers and the TFP before the CHR issued a resolution on the case.

He said they would seek the help of the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) in the investigation. The village officials said the residents belonged to the Tumandok, also known as the Panay Bukidnon or Sulodnon.

The alleged victims had also sought out the municipal council's committee on human rights.

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Davao villagers slam banana plantation project near school

DAVAO CITY—RESIDENTS OF BARANGAY Baracatan in Toril District are opposing plans by a banana company to establish a 12-hectare plantation near the Rizal Elementary School there.

Parents and teachers of the students said the proposed plantation of AJMR Holdings Corp. was very close to the elementary school.

During recent consultations by the banana firm, the residents said the children's health would be put in jeopardy once the plantation began operations.

But Anacleto Pedrosa, group manager for technical services of AJMR, said "there is nothing to worry about."

"The company will be held accountable for anything bad that will happen to the children because of the operation of the plantation," Pedrosa said.

Julie Babao, president of the school's Parents-Teachers Association, said the plantation was only about 30 meters from the school.

"What we can see now is a cleared area ready to be planted with bananas without a buffer zone. The plantation can start operations any time but we cannot see any sign that the company will ever put up a buffer zone," Babao said.

Buffer zones are areas thickly planted with trees and other vegetation that serve as protection against pesticide drift in agricultural plantation.

An angry parent assailed the company for allegedly not thinking about the health of the children.

An 11-year-old student said village officials who allowed the entry of the banana firm should have thought of their welfare before deciding on the project.

"I am scared that's why I don't want the plantation here. They should move it somewhere. I am afraid that we will suffer from the chemicals that they would be using," the girl said.

"Can you assure [us] that when you spray your poisonous chemicals we will all be spared from it, especially these children? What will happen to these children if they will be exposed to your chemicals?" Angie Lumbayon, a teacher, said.

She said she will request for a transfer to other schools if the company insisted on putting up the plantation.

"I don't want to die early," she said.

The operation of the plantation would not endanger the lives of the children and that there was no need to put up a buffer zone, he said.

He cited their plantations in Manuel Guianga in Tugbok District, which he said have literally enclosed an elementary school in the village. The same, he said, was the situation in their plantations in Davao del Norte and Compostela Valley Province.

"We've been operating in Manuel Guianga for the last 35 years and we do not have a buffer zone. But no one complained about it ... no one demanded for a buffer zone because it is not needed," Pedrosa said.

In an earlier round of consultation in Baracatan, Councilor Leo Avila, who sits as chair of the committee on environment and natural resources, said the company should establish a buffer zone before it starts planting.

Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Groups want Muslim cleric freed

COTABATO CITY—MORO MILITANT GROUPS here have demanded the release of a Muslim cleric who was allegedly wrongfully detained on suspicion of being a terrorist.

Zainab Ampatuan, deputy secretary general of the Suara Bangsamoro, said Kusain Abedin was also illegally arrested because government agents who took him in did not have any warrant for his arrest.

"The arresting officers were not armed with a court order for Abedin's arrest. Despite that, he was detained and is now being questioned," Ampatuan said.

Abedin was arrested on Thursday as he was disembarking from a passenger bus at around 7 p.m.

One of the arresting officers said Abedin resembled a terrorist suspect who was being hunted by the government.

Abedin is not a terrorist and that he is a member of the militant United Youth for Peace and Development (UYPD), Ampatuan said.

She rejected the explanation given by authorities, saying similar incidents had repeatedly taken place in the past.

"Seven other *ustadzes* were arrested in the past and every time an arrest is made, authorities give the same terror-suspect alibi," she said.

Ampatuan said one of the arrested clerics was still suffering from trauma.

"That's the problem with our government. If you're against the policy and style of governance of the President, you are doomed to be classified as enemy of the state, either an activist, a rebel, a terrorist or simply a militant and cause-oriented person susceptible to being a communist or a separatist," Ampatuan, speaking in Filipino, told the INQUIRER.

In General Santos City, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) said it would continue to fight despite the alleged state-sponsored assassination of militant leaders.

Bayan said at least six local militant leaders had received threats over the past few days.

They were Bill Andres, Bayan spokesperson, Shamrod Abdulaziz of Karapatan, Blanche Yamba, Gabriela coordinator for General Santos, Juvy Hornales of Anakbayan, and Boy Donaire and Pat Estrasa of Kadamay.

Andres said his group received the threats via text messages from an unidentified sender almost simultaneously, warning them of harm for being "communist supporters."

The death threats, he said, would never scare them.

Since 2001, at least 244 left-wing activists have been killed in the country, according to INQUIRER records. *Charlie Señase and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Safe drinking water offered to poor Palawan communities

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—A SINGLE DROP of water does not only give hope but is also a powerful instrument to unite people around the world.

The remark came from Filipino-American Gemma Bulos, founder of A Single Drop (ASD), a US-based non-government organization helping communities have access to safe drinking water by promoting a water filter that uses only cheap materials, such as gravel and sand.

Bulos said she believed in water as an equalizer of life, owing to the fact that all living things—of any kind and of status in life—need water in order to live.

"With equality, there will be unity, with unity there is peace," she claimed.

With the Philippines being rich in water resources, Bulos believed that problems steaming from lack of water should be addressed simply by tapping available resources.

By using cheap materials, Biosand makes safe drinking water accessible to the poor.

The Biosand filter is being pilot tested in Quezon, Roxas and Brooke's Point.

Palawan was chosen as one of the pilot areas because the community members themselves wanted potable water and the residents were willing and cooperative.

The installation and construction of the filter were still in process.

The Biosand filter is like a traditional slow sand filter being used in most commercialized water purifiers.

"It is simply a concrete container, with layers of sand and gravel inside it. The sand and gravel remove dirt, bacteria, viruses and parasites and other impurities from the water," Bulos claimed.

The Biosand filter, she said, removes more than 90 percent of fecal coliform, 100 percent of protozoa and helmints, 50 to 90 percent of organic and inorganic toxicants, and up to 67 percent of iron and manganese. It also removes most suspended sediments in water.

The "affordable, simple and sustainable" filter, which can "produce up to 60 liters of filtered water per hour," could be used for many years, according to Bulos.

The ASD has gained approval and support from the Department of Health.

With the technology having passed through several scientific testing, Bulos looked forward for support from local government units that would make the technology acceptable to local communities.

A Single Drop reached Puerto Princesa last June through a workshop hosted by the Palawan NGO Network Inc. and co-sponsored by the Women's Global Green Action Network, while the Center for Affordable Water and Sanitation Technology provided the trainers.

Bulos said the filter is easy to build as done by the participants in the workshop that brought together 18 persons from different towns in Palawan during the first set of workshops and 27 participants in the second set.

She said the filter would not directly compete with commercial water purifier traders as it is intended for the poor or "those who wouldn't buy bottled water."

"The Biosand technology also gives health workers an opportunity to go and speak up to the household level to tackle about hygiene," she said.

The Palawan NGO Network Inc., the partner NGO of A Single Drop, said the latter will open its office in Puerto Princesa City this month to make the product more accessible to the poor. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ARK of the COVENANT

Replica from Israel accepted by Dr. RICK WARREN with open arms and joy together with the Hallelujah Banner

The turn-over of the Replica of the ARK OF THE COVENANT and the HALLELUJAH Banner to the man of God, Dr. RICK WARREN. Mrs. GRACE GALINDEZ-GUPANA, President, Praise God (PG) Tower Ministries Int'l., Rev. Val Febrer of Gising Kabataan, Rev. Gabriel Gacos and Rev. Alfred Merejilla of Project John 10:10 / 10 CAM at the National Purpose Driven Congress held at ULTRA, July 26, 2006.

A Great commitment to a GREAT COMMANDMENT. A great commission will grow to a great church, nation. Blessed was the year 2003 for Ms. Grace Galindez-Gupana and her company, ABS Gen Herbs International Corporation. As one of the first recipients of Rick Warrren's life-changing book, The Purpose Driven Life. Ms Grace and her ABS family were inspired and led by the Lord to not only put their lives more in line with His divine purpose, but also share the blessings they found in the book to others. ABS Herbs distributed 10,000 copies of The Purpose Driven Life for free to government agencies, schools and churches in the hope that the book would inspire the same change it sparked in the company.

As a token, ABS Herbs family and PG Tower ministries gave Dr. Rick Warren a replica of the Ark of the Covenant that was copied in the Wilderness Tabernacle in Israel made in the Philippines. Dr. Warren, whose wife has been teaching about the Ark of the Covenant and Tabernacle for 20 years, exclaimed "When Kay sees this, she will start crying because she has been teaching on this for 20 years. And it's so amazing! She will use it in her seminars." And when Ms. Grace explained the spiritual meaning behind her vision about combined Philippines and Israel flag together, Dr. Warren could not contain his joy, and he exclaimed "HALLELUJAH! What a revelation!"

Recently, Ms. Grace Gupana has also given three replicas of the Ark of the Covenant to Rev. Richard Muñoz from Florida, city of David. The second one was received by Rev. Tito Sanchez of Alliance Faith Fellowship in Anaheim, California, and the last by Rev. Jarren Lapazaran.

What is the **ARK OF THE COVENANT**? In the Old Testament, the Bible calls it, "The place of God's presence." *Exodus 25:22*. While in the New Testament, it is referred to in the verse, "Jesus is GOD in human form." *John 1:14*. The ARK OF THE COVENANT contains the **10 Commandments:** The testimony - the law was given by God inscribed by His hand. The 2 tablets represent the Law of God the Father who is the legislator of the Triune God. The **rod of Aaron** represents the Holy Spirit as the executive Person of the Godhead that executed the couple who broke the 10 commandments (Acts 5:3-10). The **Manna** given by God as food to the people in the wilderness. Jesus called himself the "bread of life." (Ex. 16, John 6:35, 48-51). **The Ark of the Covenant** symbolizes the importance of obeying the laws and commandments of God by the leading of the Holy Spirit and belief in the Triune God.

The MANDATE of PG Tower Ministries is to boldly teach our people and remind everyone about STAYING and LIVING in the PRESENCE of GOD, with Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior in our hearts. The Ark of the Covenant is a TEACHING TOOL that points to the saving grace by faith in the Lordship of Jesus Christ and obedience to the laws lead to PHYSICAL ORDER and PROSPERITY of man in the land, as Jesus said "I came not to abolish the law but to fulfill the law" (Matt.5:17).

For tickets of Philippine MAP Revolution Summit 2006, call the secretariat: 426-3699 * 929-0955 * 920-0757. Look for Ms. Jenny. *(First come, first served)*

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DEFEND LIFE

& HUMAN DIGNITY!

Let Justice and Peace Flow like Clear Waters!

We, advocates of peace, believe that there can be peace only when there is justice. In this light, we affirm that the right of a person to life, liberty and human dignity is inalienable and must be guaranteed and protected at all times. In the same vein, since human life is sacred and is an irreplaceable gift of God, we believe that a person could not be killed on the basis of his political beliefs and actual exercise of political freedoms.

We are deeply concerned then with the unbridled killing of political activists and leaders in the entire country. The pattern of impunity violates the very essence of the fundamental freedoms of expression and organization, and shows a clear disregard of due process and equal protection of the Constitution and international agreements on respect for human rights and civil liberties.

In Central Luzon alone, the people are being confronted by political repression that saw an unprecedented rise upon the deployment of Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan as Commanding Officer of the Philippine Army's 7th Infantry Division last September 2005. Last year alone, there were fifty (50) cases of summary killings, fourteen (14) frustrated killings, seven (7) desaparecidos, and countless arbitrary arrests, illegal searches, coercion and harassments. In the first half of 2006, there are already thirty (30) victims of summary execution and massacre, and thirty-four (34) persons missing, among other human rights abuses. Most of the victims are leaders and members of militant organizations and progressive partylist groups.

Reinforcing our apprehension is the President's declaration of all-out war and the subsequent allocation of the P1-B counter-insurgency fund. Such declaration laid the basis for the deployment of additional 500 troops by the AFP in Central Luzon. Currently, military detachments continue to mushroom even in urban areas like Angeles City, San Fernando City and Mabalacat, all in Pampanga, and in coastal areas like Malolos City, Hagonoy, Obando and Paombong in Bulacan.

As advocates of peace, we cannot just sit and watch as the masses are made to endure violations of their political rights, even as their very right to life continues to be violated by widespread landlessness, joblessness, poverty and hunger. The signs of the times call upon us to respond with prayers, vigilance and positive actions.

In this light, we strongly condemn the spate of political killings which is sowing great fear and uncertainty in the country today and specifically in our communities in Central Luzon.

We believe that political suppression and violence do not manifest strength but are manifestations of weak and ineffective governance.

We call on our local and national government officials, especially President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, to stop the escalation of violence, demoralization, dehumanization and political killings that darken our people's lives. We strongly suggest that an independent body be formed to investigate, prosecute and punish those found guilty.

Peace is the goal of all we do;
Love leads to justice on the earth;
Let justice flow like waters clear,
So we may see the world's rebirth.

(Douglas Clark)

We appeal that the P1-B counter-insurgency fund allocated by President Arroyo be rechanneled to basic social services and other essential concerns.

We earnestly urge the government to squarely face our country's social ills and find solutions through the negotiating table.

As we commit ourselves to work more vigorously for the defense of life and human dignity, we call on all human rights advocates, our religious sisters and brothers, and all concerned citizens for greater vigilance and collective action for justice and peace in defense of our freedoms and democracy.

Building peace is upholding human dignity and promoting fullness of life. Let us be one in defending life and human dignity! LET JUSTICE AND PEACE FLOW LIKE CLEAR WATERS!

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Floods destroy bridge in N. Cotabato

COTABATO CITY—THE ROAD LINKING Davao and Cotabato cities has been cut off after a 60-meter bridge in Makilala, North Cotabato collapsed on Friday dawn.

Flash floods triggered by heavy rains destroyed a 10-meter portion of the Kisante Bridge in Barangay Kisante in Makilala.

The floods also washed away and killed three members of a family, according to radio station dxND in Kidapawan City.

Residents reported that a Honda Civic car driven by Danilo Tuviera was swept away by rampaging waters and fell off the bridge into the creek. The driver has remained missing.

Engineer Peter Salac of the North Cotabato provincial engineering office said it could take some time to repair the bridge.

Provincial engineering workers have recommended the establishment of a detour bridge to restore traffic flow.

While the bridge is impassable, commuters can take the Makilala-Koronadal-General Santos City route to Davao City.

Jun Adam, Cotabato office manager of Weena Transport, the lone bus firm plying the Cotabato-Davao route, said the firm continued operations from Cotabato City to the vicinity of Barangay Kisante.

Commuters have to transfer to another Weena bus that will take them to Davao City and vice versa.

Kisante is located at the southern part of the slope of Mount Apo, the country's highest peak.

North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol has directed the provincial engineering office to check other bridges, especially those along the main highway, to prevent similar occurrences.

Killed

In Misamis Oriental, four persons, including two children, died while another went missing after rampaging waters swept them as they crossed a river early Wednesday morning.

Ted Sabugaa, Misamis Oriental social welfare officer, said Ronald Ayuman and his wife Anna Marie were crossing the Balatukan River in Balingasag town when it suddenly swelled and engulfed them.

He said the couple's children—Neil, 7, and Joy, 3—drowned.

The Ayumans were trying to flee the rising floodwaters, triggered by intermittent rains, which have affected Barangay Napaliran.

He said the overflowing Balatukan River destroyed a dike system in Napaliran and submerged two more villages in nearby Lagonglong town.

The provincial government earlier identified these areas as flood- and landslide prone.

"A torrential rain that lasts five hours will surely result in flood," Sabugaa said.

Early this year, the provincial government ordered the relocation of residents living in dried-up rivers and along riverbanks because of high risk of flash flood and landslides.

But Sabugaa said most of the residents did not heed the order.

Misamis Oriental Gov. Oscar Moreno said at least 30 families had fled Napaliran as the floodwaters swept away 10 shanties to the sea.

The families sought refuge at the Napaliran Elementary School, he said.

Moreno placed the flood damage at P30 million in property, infrastructure and farm crops.

In Balingasag alone, which is one of the main suppliers of vegetables to Manila, 17 hectares of vegetable farms and a papaya plantation were destroyed. *Edwin O. Fernandez and Grace Cantal-Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

SEVENTEEN villages in Candaba in Pampanga remain under water after Typhoon "Henry" hit the town last week. JOAN BONDOC

Kids break piggy banks to save girl

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—WHEN A LOCAL RADIO AND television broadcaster called for help in his program to save the life of a young girl, people from all walks of life in the city and neighboring towns responded, most of them preferring anonymity.

Arnel Avila, host of the "Pag-usapan Natin" daily morning program aired over cable STV6, described the response to his calls to help 3-year-old Gwyneth Aranilla as "a concrete manifestation of man's inherent compassion."

The young girl, of Purok Narra in Barangay Isabang, was accidentally hit in the head by a stray bullet from a .45 cal. pistol fired by an alleged drunken neighbor, identified as Florentino Maristela Jr., in the evening of July 31.

Gwyneth was rushed to the Lucena United Doctors Hospital and immediately underwent operation. Her skull was severely damaged by the bullet.

Avila said he was shocked when he learned of the incident.

"How could a little girl like Gwyneth suffer that much from the stupidity of another person? It's simply revolting. I told myself, I couldn't take this sitting down. The law can very well take its course against the suspect. But I have to do something to help the young girl, which I believe probably saved her father," he said.

When the suspect was firing his gun, the girl's father, Eddie, was about to step out of the house to request the neighbor to stop shooting, but Gwyneth pleaded to him to just ignore the man.

As the little girl played, Maristela fired another shot to the ground, but the bullet hit a stone, ricocheted, and hit Gwyneth.

"Had the girl's father confronted the drunken neighbor, he could have been shot, too," Avila said.

When he learned of the big amount needed to cover the girl's medical expense, Avila immediately appealed for help through his program.

The response almost duplicated the enthusiasm of viewers two years ago when Avila appealed for help for typhoon victims of Northern Quezon.

Since Thursday, when he first made the appeal, Avila's program was swamped by phone calls from civic leaders, bankers, members, employees and many other good Samaritans.

"Most requested anonymity," he said.

Conrado Abastillas, a *balikbayan* from California, USA, called the station and cried in pity for the girl, and donated P5,000. He also condemned the suspect for irresponsible firing of the gun.

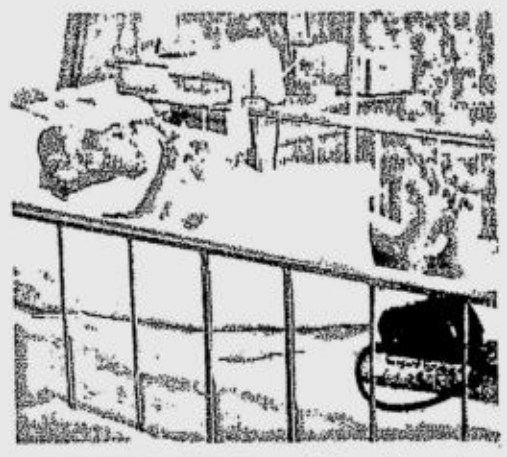
"Many little girls came to the TV station and donated their coin savings. One of them, 5-year-old Jazmine de la Cruz, even broke her piggy bank and donated her entire P680 savings to help save Gwyneth. It's one of the most inspiring moments of my media career," said Avila.

His fraternity brothers and sisters from the Alpha Phi Omega also passed the hat.

The attending doctor, Arnold Aparte, who waived his medical fee, facilitated the giving of a discount by the hospital.

On Friday, Avila handed over P95,000 to the father of the victim. Eddie occasionally accepts house painting jobs for a living.

"But the medical treatment is still a long way to go. We need more generous donors to save the child," Avila said.



THREE-YEAR-OLD Gwyneth Aranilla at the intensive care unit of the Lucena United Doctors Hospital. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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NPA rebels in Quezon warn abusive officials

LUCENA CITY—NEW PEOPLE'S Army (NPA) rebels in Quezon have warned local government officials not to abuse their positions and stop committing "anti-revolutionary activities" to avoid assassination by their "Sparrow Units."

"We will not hesitate to enforce punishment against government officials found guilty beyond reasonable doubt by the people's court on charges of plunder, grave violation of human rights, environmental destruction and being protector of criminal syndicates like those into illegal drugs," Armin de Guia, spokesperson of the NPA's Apolonio Mendoza Command (AMC), said in his first phone interview with the media.

But De Guia did not disclose of they already had the list of abusive local officials.

;He said his group didn't know yet of any local politicians that openly fought and opposed the revolutionary movement.

On Monday, the Communist Party of the Philippines' Military Commission ordered the NPA to ambush "enemy" politicians and government officials, aside from other new combat plans that had been spelled out in its message titled "Major Points in the Tit for Tat Struggle against the US-directed War of Terror."

De Guia brushed aside the threat of new Southern Luzon Command head Maj. Gen. Alexander Yano to intensify attacks on communist guerrillas in the region.

"There is nothing new to it. Since the dictatorship of (Ferdinand) Marcos and up to Arroyo's term, Quezon province has always been the recipient of heavy deployment of Solcom fascist forces. In fact, we expect the arrival of more enemies in the area," he said.

De Guia belittled the Army's capability to launch the administration's renewed counterinsurgency campaign.

He said it would not be enough for the military and police to cover the entire Quezon area.

He claimed that from November to July, the NPA guerrillas staged 33 attacks on government forces in Quezon and "demobilized" at least 40 Army soldiers and policemen.

Solcom spokesperson Army Maj. Jose Broso, however, scoffed at De Guia's figures.

"With the low morale experienced by most NPA rebels nationwide due to successive blows being inflicted against them, those newly activated NPA spokesmen nationwide have all been tasked to provide the media with fabricated figures to create a victorious situation," Broso said.

Killed

In Capiz, suspected communist rebels shot dead an Army officer attending a town fiesta on Saturday.

Capt. Abelardo Motia died from 10 bullet wounds after he was attacked in the town proper of Dumarao, 60 km south of Roxas City, at around 6 p.m., said Maj. Lyndon Sollesta, spokesperson of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division.

Sollesta said two men armed with .45 cal. handguns approached Motia, who was in civilian clothes, as he was about to board a motorcycle and shot him. They took his .45 cal. pistol, wallet and cellular phone, he said.

Witnesses also saw at least five other persons who acted as lookouts. The killers retreated toward the hinterland villages of Dumarao.

Motia was dead on arrival at the Dumarao District Hospital.

"The mode of killing is similar to a tactic by the NPA Sparrow Unit," Sollesta told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

The victim, reportedly a native of Surigao City, headed the Civilian Military Operations (CMO) of the 12th Infantry Battalion based in Miag-ao, Iloilo and formerly assigned to Dumarao under the 33rd Division Reconnaissance Company, said Sollesta.

The Army unit condemned the killing. Sollesta said Motia "upheld the human rights" even of captured and wounded NPA rebels.

He said Motia, who led soldiers who clashed with rebels in Dumarao in 2004, pushed for the hospitalization of a rebel who was wounded and captured.

Troops of the 47th Infantry Battalion were pursuing the rebels. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Nestor Burgos Jr. and Felipe Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Bomb threat at Dole

CALAMBA CITY—Tension gripped the regional office of the Department of Labor and Employment in Barangay Parian here after an unidentified caller had told an employee that a bomb was planted in the workplace on Tuesday. City police chief Supt. Roland Bustos said experts of the Explosive Ordnance Division in Camp Ricardo Papa in Bicutan, Taguig, together with local policemen and three bomb-sniffing dogs, inspected the whole building for three hours but found nothing. ***Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Teacher's body found

BACOLOD CITY—The bloated body of a high school teacher, believed to have been raped and killed, was found in an irrigation canal in Purok Sampaguita, Barangay Abuanan, Bago City in Negros Occidental on Wednesday. The body was identified to be that of Allen Hope Gayatina Barcoma, 24, of Barangay Pilar, Hinigaran town, a teacher of the Fellowship Baptist Church in Binalbagan, police said. Barcoma was reportedly fetched by an unidentified person riding in a white car in front of her boarding house in Binalbagan at about 8 p.m. Tuesday, and had not been seen since, RMN-Radyo Bacolod reported. Bago police chief Supt. Alex Belonio said he believed the woman was raped and killed in another area and her body was dumped in Abuanan.
Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau

Films vs child abuse

CITY OF CALAPAN—Stairway Foundation Inc., a Puerto Galera-based nongovernment organization, has been using animation films to raise public consciousness on child sexual abuse prevention. Among these films are "The Daughter," a story on incest, which won at the Annecy International Animation Film Festival for best educational film award and a Special Unicef award, and "A Good Boy," a true story on pedophilia. Social worker Amihan Bajade said that in a community in Puerto Galera, there were 16 children reported to be victims of sexual abuse while another 16 girls in San Isidro, Talipanan, Puerto Galera, suffered the same abuse.
Madonna Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

MILF leader slain

COTABATO CITY—Unidentified gunmen killed a ranking commander of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) during an ambush in Pagalungan, Maguindanao. Lt. Col. Johnny Bucu, chief of the Army's 40th Infantry Battalion, said Abu Hashim, commander of the 105th Bangsamoro Islamic Armed Forces based in Barangay Inug-ug, was on his way home aboard a single motorcycle on Sunday evening when waylaid. Hashim died of multiple bullet wounds in the body. Bucu said the incident could have been triggered by a grudge involving Hashim and another group.
Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Execs linked to job rackets

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Some government officials here are under surveillance for illegal recruitment and human trafficking, but Chief Insp. Ronald Añonuevo of the Philippine Council on Transnational Crime (PCTC) have refused to name them. Añonuevo said the identities and details of the officials' involvement were disclosed by the victims. "Fixing illegal documents is one of their expertise," he said. The PCTC is attending to 285 cases lodged by victims before his office. "Many are still unreported because the victims of the families are either embarrassed or afraid to report," he said.
Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

2 soldiers hurt in clash

IBA, Zambales—Two Army soldiers were wounded when their unit clashed with communist rebels in Barangay Sta. Rita in Masinloc town on Monday. Cpl. Jamel Leonin and Pfc. Veric Cardinal were brought to the President Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Hospital here. Reports reaching the Zambales police operations center in Camp Conrado Yap here said the fight started at around noon. Five hours later, some 500 soldiers from the Army's 24th Infantry Battalion were exchanging gunfire with 200 rebels in a forested area in Masinloc, police said. ***Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

NPA leader slain

FORT MAGSAYSAY, Nueva Ecija—A New People's Army leader was killed in a clash with government soldiers in Subic, Zambales, on Thursday. Lt. Col. Felipe Anotado, commander of the Army's 24th Infantry Brigade, said the slain rebel was believed to be a top official because his backpack carried valuable intelligence documents. The body was turned over to officials of Dinalupihan, Bataan, Anotado said. The battle between government troops and about 40 rebels broke out at 10 a.m. in Barangay Batiawan in Subic at the boundary of Pampanga, Bataan and Zambales.
Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Gawad Kalinga to build relocation houses

PANGIL, Laguna—The Gawad Kalinga Community Development Foundation has offered to build homes for the 109 families whose dwellings in Barangay Dambo here were found prone to landslide. Maria Paz Santos, Pangil municipal planning and management coordinator, said the group was planning a 5,911-sqm relocation site along the boundary of Dambo and Barangay Matalatala, Mabitac town. Santos, a member of the Task Force Barangay Dambo Mountain Rehabilitation, said 61 homeowners, who must urgently transfer, will have their units completed in two to three months.
Romulo Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

3 NPA rebels slain in Davao Sur clash

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Government troops killed three New People's Army (NPA) rebels in an operation in the hinterland of Kiblawan town, Davao del Sur on Thursday afternoon. Brig. Gen. Alfredo Cayton, 601st Army Brigade commander based here, said the figure was based on the bodies recovered by members of the Army's 66th Infantry Battalion after the 45-minute armed encounter in Sitio Latil, Barangay Abnate in Kiblawan. Cayton said they launched the operation after about 40 NPA guerrillas were reported in the area. ***Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

Negros planter exec gets jail term

BACOLOD CITY—For not paying P500,000 worth of sugar entrusted to him by a sugar mill nine years ago, the president of a sugar planters' group in northern Negros Occidental was sentenced to up to 15 years in prison by the regional trial court of Cadiz City.

Executive Judge Renato Muñez on July 26 found Manuel Belmonte Consing, president and manager of the United Sagay, Escalante, Toboso Planters Association Inc. (Usetpai), guilty of estafa for failing to pay for the sugar of Gamboa Hermanos Inc., a company engaged in sugar production and other agriculture and aquaculture businesses in the province.

Sentence

Consing received a prison sentence of 8-15 years and ordered to pay the company P544,825.60, representing the unpaid proceeds of its sugar quedans.

The court also cancelled the bail posted by Consing and ordered him to be immediately brought to the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa.

A co-accused, Nelly Ballesteros Reyes, the cashier of the association, was acquitted for insufficient evidence.

According to the court, Consing defrauded Gamboa Hermanos Inc. of "B" or domestic sugar valued at P544,825.60 on June 12, 1997. Sugar quedans or supply certificates were delivered to Usetpai, represented by Consing, to be sold to the National Food Authority.

Instead of remitting the proceeds of the sale of the sugar to Gamboa Hermanos, Consing misappropriated portions of the amount for his own benefit, the court ruled. He "deliberately feigned that he could no longer account for the total proceeds," Muñez said. *Carla Gomez, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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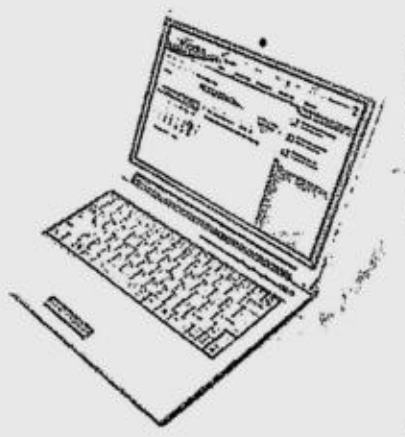
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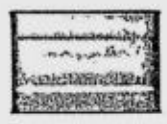
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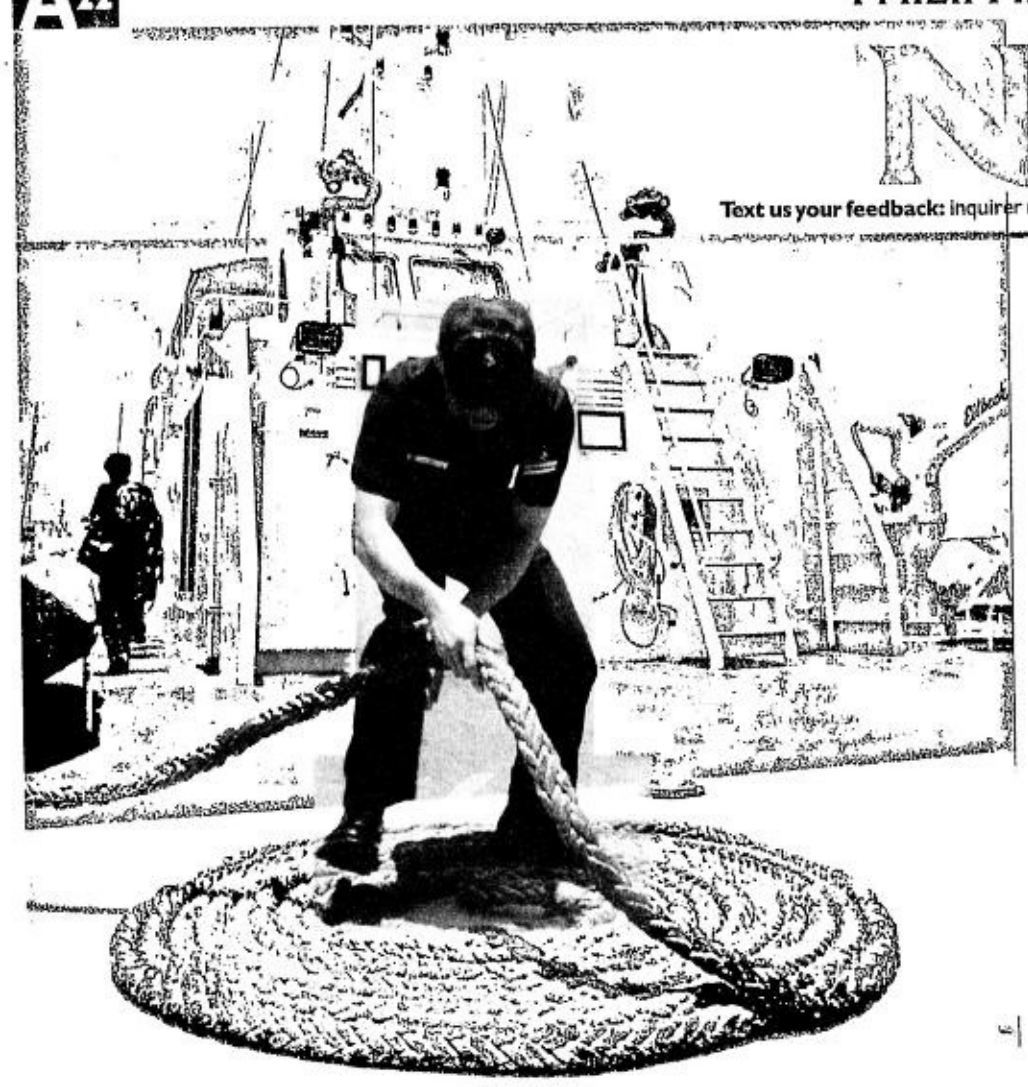


A PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD officer gets one of two 56-m search and rescue vessels ready for the trip to Lebanon to ferry the Filipinos there to safety *(Story on Page A1)*. RYAN LIM

Int'l team here to probe killings of local activists

By Luige A. del Puerto

A VISITING INTERNATIONAL TEAM OF HUMAN rights advocates has begun a three-day inquiry into the alleged killing of Filipino activists by state agents.

The visit followed calls by the academe and local groups to bring the reported assassinations to the attention of the international community, particularly the United Nations, where the Philippines holds a seat on its human rights council.

Police last week acknowledged that the issue had reached the international arena but cautioned the public against propaganda that was being "rammed down our throats."

Militants said some 18 farmers, doctors and teachers from the United States, France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Japan, Mexico, India, Nepal, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Malaysia, Sri Lanka and Indonesia began on Sunday their visit to Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog, where most cases of alleged extrajudicial killings had been recorded.

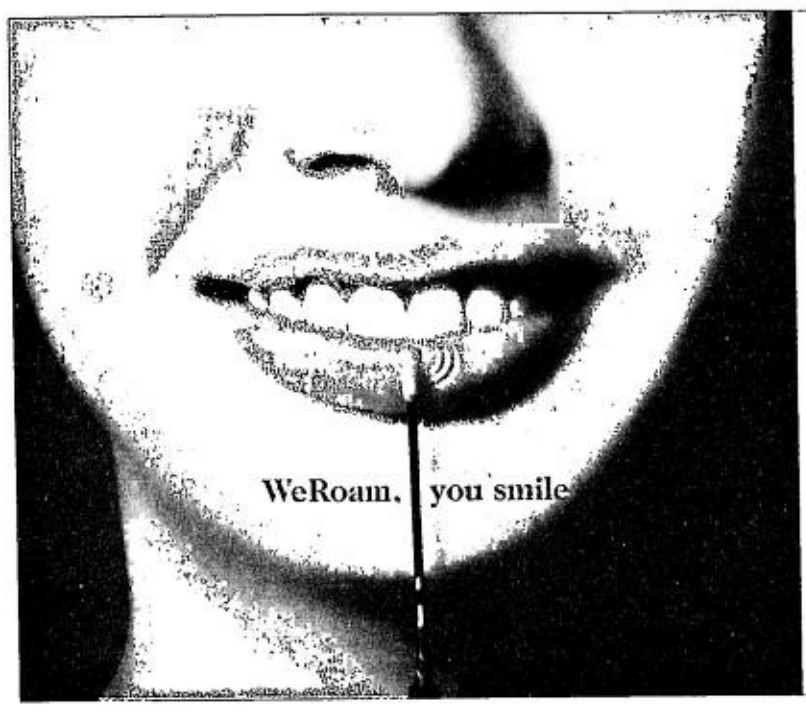
"They will help expose (the killings) to the international community, and to their own governments, institutions and rights groups so they would take a position on what is happening here," said Carl Ala, spokesperson of the leftist Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas.

Ala said the delegates, who were expected to wrap up their probe on Aug. 8, would submit their findings to the House, the Senate, the Commission on Human Rights and the United Nations.

Since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001, some 245 activists had been murdered, according to an INQUIRER count. Karapatan, a human rights group, placed the number at 720.

Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, chair of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, last week urged Ms Arroyo to form an independent body to probe the murders.

"It is ironic to see the continuing gross violations of human rights happening almost on a daily basis, while the Philippine government claims with pride that it was elected as a member of the (UN) Human Rights Council and that it has an Indigenous Peoples' Rights Act," Tauli-Corpuz said.



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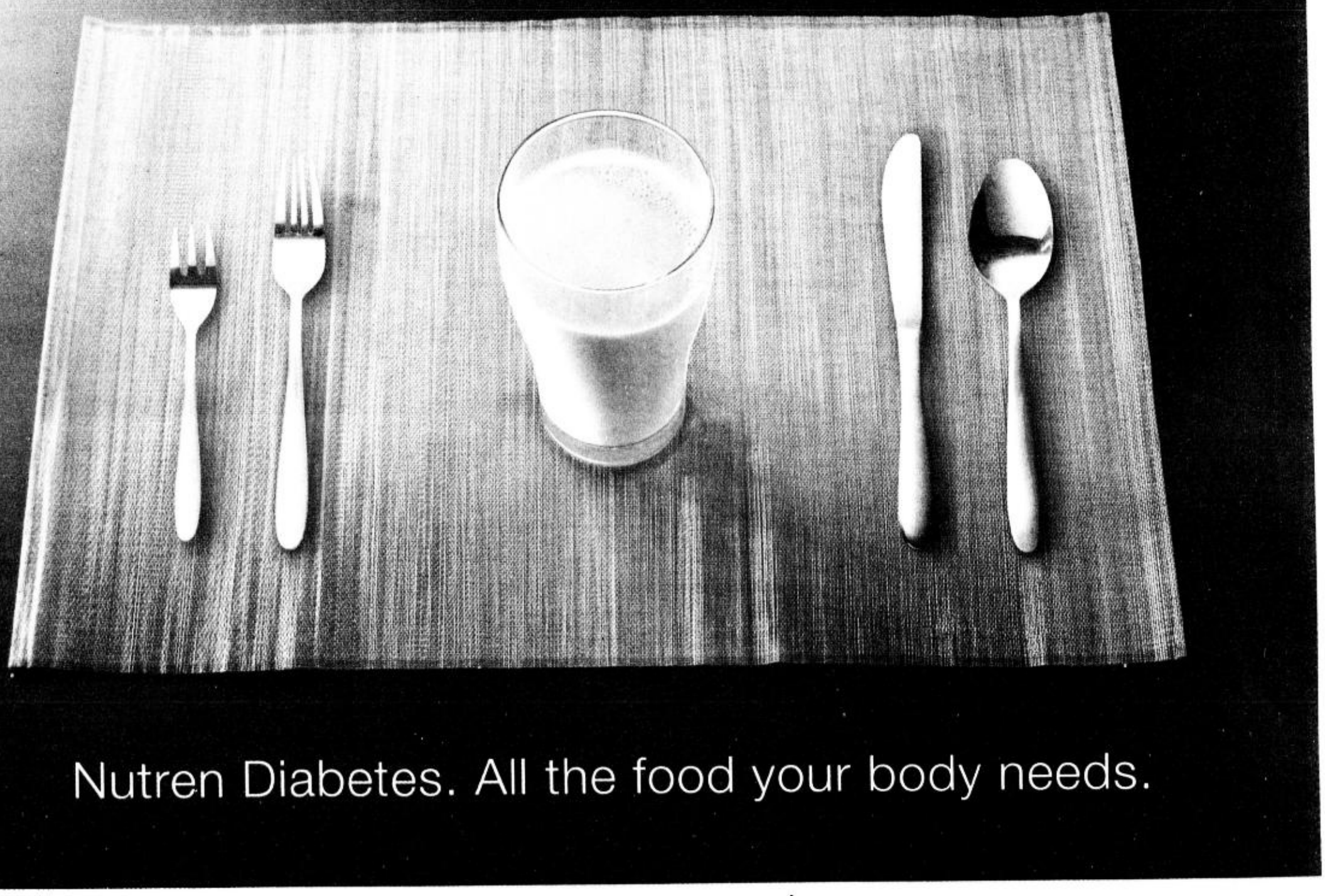

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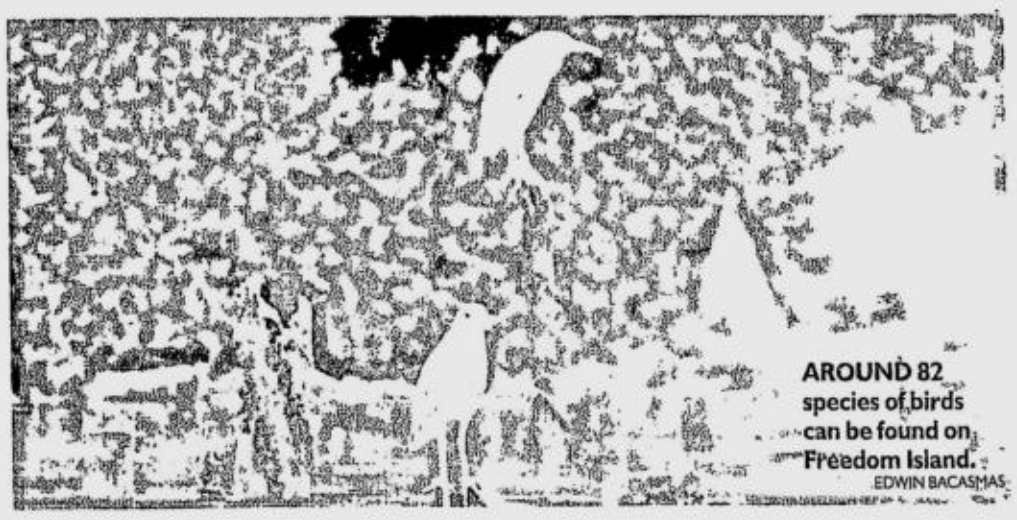
Parañaque protects city's winged visitors

City gov't plans to turn La Huerta, Tambo mangroves into bird sanctuaries



AROUND 82 species of birds can be found on Freedom Island. EDWIN BACASMAS

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THOUSANDS OF TRANSIENTS IN PARAñaque City are in need of a permanent home.

The homeless, however, are of the feathered kind—birds frequently sighted in the city like the Chinese Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons, Kentish plovers, Curlew Sandpipers and Siberian Ruby Throats, among others.

According to Jo Orozca, city tourism officer in charge, Parañaque has been eyeing two mangrove areas that could serve as a haven for its "guests." These are in Barangay La Huerta and the mudflats in Barangay Tambo called "Freedom Island," just off the Coastal Road.

"The one in Barangay La Huerta has been officially declared as a bird sanctuary," Orozca told the INQUIRER in an interview.

The property, donated by the Public Estates Authority (PEA) to the city government, covers around five to seven hectares, she added.

Bird haven

It would soon be developed into a bird haven, complete with viewing towers, boardwalks, educational centers and a park where bird lovers, watchers and photography clubs could meet, that is, if plans of the local government would push through with the help of the Wild Bird Club (WBC) of the Philippines.

A similar plan has also been drawn up for the 25-ha "Freedom Island," where more than 82 species of birds have been sighted, as recorded by the WBC, since January 2003.

The property, however, has yet to be placed under the care of the local government. "The PEA has yet to identify which part of the land will be turned over to the government so the property rights is still with them," Orozca said.

The WBC, in a letter to the city government's Special Services Office, has suggested that Parañaque, jointly declare the island, with the Las Piñas government, a protected area.

"We have learned that Las Piñas Representative Cynthia Villar has plans of declaring the part of the island that lies in Las Piñas as a protected area," said Michael Lu, the club's president, in his letter dated Oct. 21, 2005.

Over 80 species

Out of the 82 bird species on Freedom Island, 46 were classified as water birds, 28 belonged to the grassland variety and the rest were associated with wetlands.

About 30 percent of the bird species were rare, said the project proposal prepared by the Coastal and Marine Management Division of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources-National Capital Region.

"This is considered as a relatively high percentage for a very small urban locality like Barangay Tambo. Among the rare birds that could be found in the area include the globally threatened Chinese Egret and the famous Siberian Ruby Throat," said the agency.

It also said that the sanctuary was a very important stopover for the hundred thousand or so migratory water birds during winter in neighboring countries.

The agency also identified the area as one of the remaining portions of Metro Manila that has maintained its mangrove cover, which serve as a nursery for various marine organisms such as fish, crabs and shrimps.

Natural shield

"Without mangroves, our shorelines and coastal communities would lose their natural shield against typhoons and other natural calamities," the agency said.

In 2004, the city council, led by Councilor Carlito Antipuesto, came up with an ordinance declaring the area as a bird sanctuary, reiterating the power of local government units to enact ordinances to protect its environment under Republic Act 7160.

The proposed law prohibited the "cutting and harvesting of mangroves and other plant species; the killing of wildlife species; the collecting, hunting or possession of wildlife, their by-products and derivatives; squatting and occupying any portion of the sanctuary and the gathering or destroying of active nests in trees."

Any person caught violating the law will be fined P5,000 or face imprisonment of one to six months.

However, the proposed ordinance has been gathering dust after the councilors passed it

PARAÑAQUE/ A24

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Convert soccer fields into parking lots, BF asks school execs

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THIS SUGGESTION WOULD definitely not sit well with football fanatics. However, *sepak takraw* fans would be delighted.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) Chair Bayani Fernando yesterday suggested that large private schools located along major roads in the metropolis turn their football fields into parking lots.

This, he pointed out, would help solve the perennial traffic problem in areas surrounding schools.

Instead of football, school officials should just encourage their students to take up *sipa*, Fernando said in jest.

"*Sipa* consumes less space so if they play sipa instead of football, they could use the field as a parking area," the MMDA chair added.

Seriously, though

Fernando, however, reiterated that he was serious about asking school officials to turn their football fields into parking areas for students' vehicles. He particularly cited the schools located near Ortigas Avenue in Mandaluyong City and on Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City—considered the busiest roads in Metro Manila during the school year.

"That's a serious suggestion. [Doing that] has been a necessity for a long time now. I have told them [school authorities] about this because we really have to do something about the traffic problem," Fernando said in a phone interview yesterday.

Problem areas

The MMDA considers as problem areas the portion of Ortigas Avenue near the De La Salle University and the stretch of Katipunan Avenue in front of the Ateneo de Manila University.

"It is part of the social responsibility of schools because there is a public clamor for this problem to be solved," he added.

Fernando said traffic bottlenecks have been a common sight on Ortigas and Katipunan Avenues, particularly during the times when students are dropped off or fetched from school.

"They (school officials) have done something about it and have set aside parking areas inside, but it is still not enough. I am hoping that we can invoke their civic spirit. I am confident this suggestion will effect some action," Fernando told the INQUIRER.

Suggestion shelved

Traffic jams near school zones in Metro Manila have long been a problem for the MMDA. As early as 2002, the agency has suggested that schools implement a scheme where students would be dropped off in a common area and then shuttled to the campus, preventing the piling up of school-bound vehicles on major roads. The idea, however, was shelved after parents expressed concern over their children's safety.

FERNANDO

Two hurt in Muntinlupa fire

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FED BY HIGHLY FLAMMABLE materials, a fire quickly engulfed two establishments in Muntinlupa City yesterday, leaving two workers injured and causing P5 million worth of damage to property.

The fire, which broke out at 11:14 a.m., first hit Paintplas Corp., a car paint shop and then spread to Golden Fashion Corp., a furniture store in Tepaurel Compound, an industrial area in Barangay Putatan.

Fire Officer 2 Marlon Santos, arson investigator of the Muntinlupa Fire Station, said a security guard of the paint shop reported the fire which began in one of the rooms inside the establishment.

Even though the shop was closed, five stay-in employees were at the establishment. Two of them—Jose Peter Rios and Jose Nueva España—sustained minor burns in the arms as they tried to douse the flames using fire extinguishers.

The two were given first aid before they were rushed to a nearby hospital, Santos said. The three other workers were reported to be safe.

The blaze quickly spread to the adjacent furniture shop, fueled by highly-combustible paint. Within minutes, firemen at the scene raised the alarm to Task Force Bravo, one of the highest alert levels which requires fire fighters from other stations and detachments around Metro Manila to rush to the scene.

Santos said some 27 fire trucks, including those from volunteer fire brigades and from the faraway towns of Biñan and San Pedro in Laguna, rushed to the site and worked together until the fire was put out by 1:26 p.m.

Gas station in Pasig reopens

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE SMALL GAS STATION A FEW METERS away from the biggest public market in Pasig City has finally reopened almost three weeks after it was closed following a gas spill.

The Sea Oil gasoline station in Barangay Palatiw resumed operations on Friday afternoon, about three weeks after more than 500 liters of unleaded gasoline spilled from one of its underground storage tank.

Partial compliance

The company has partially complied with the requirements—application for permits and submission of reports—the environment officials had set, City Environment and Natural Resources chief Raquel Naciongayo told the INQUIRER.

The spill occurred on July 19 while a private delivery tanker was refilling one of the two underground storage tanks of the station located at the corner of Market Avenue and Baltazar Street.

The employees refilling the storage tank kept on putting in more gasoline although it was already full, causing the gas to spill out onto the street.

Firemen to the rescue

Firefighters rushed to the area and scooped up the gas using pails, worried that it would flow into the creek and trigger an explosion.

The company later continued the cleanup but two weeks after the incident, the Cenro reported that 250 liters of gas were still unaccounted for.

"The company has already recovered half of the 250 liters while the other half went into the drainage," Naciongayo said.

Go-signal

Still, with recent tests in the area showing that the level of hydrocarbons was already below the standard, the Environment and Management Bureau issued the company a permit to operate, she added.

But the company will still have to pay fines for various penalties. The station is also required to install an oil and water separator as well as find another private delivery hauler with the necessary permits, Naciongayo told the INQUIRER.

Makati jail inmates complete IT training

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FOR THESE INMATES, A CHANCE at a better life was offered to them right inside the detention facility.

A total of 116 inmates of the Makati City Jail (MCJ) have just completed a 20-day computer literacy training program which was conducted behind bars.

Computer 101

Under the program, prisoners who knew little or absolutely nothing about operating a computer were taught basic applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Paint, the virtual drawing program.

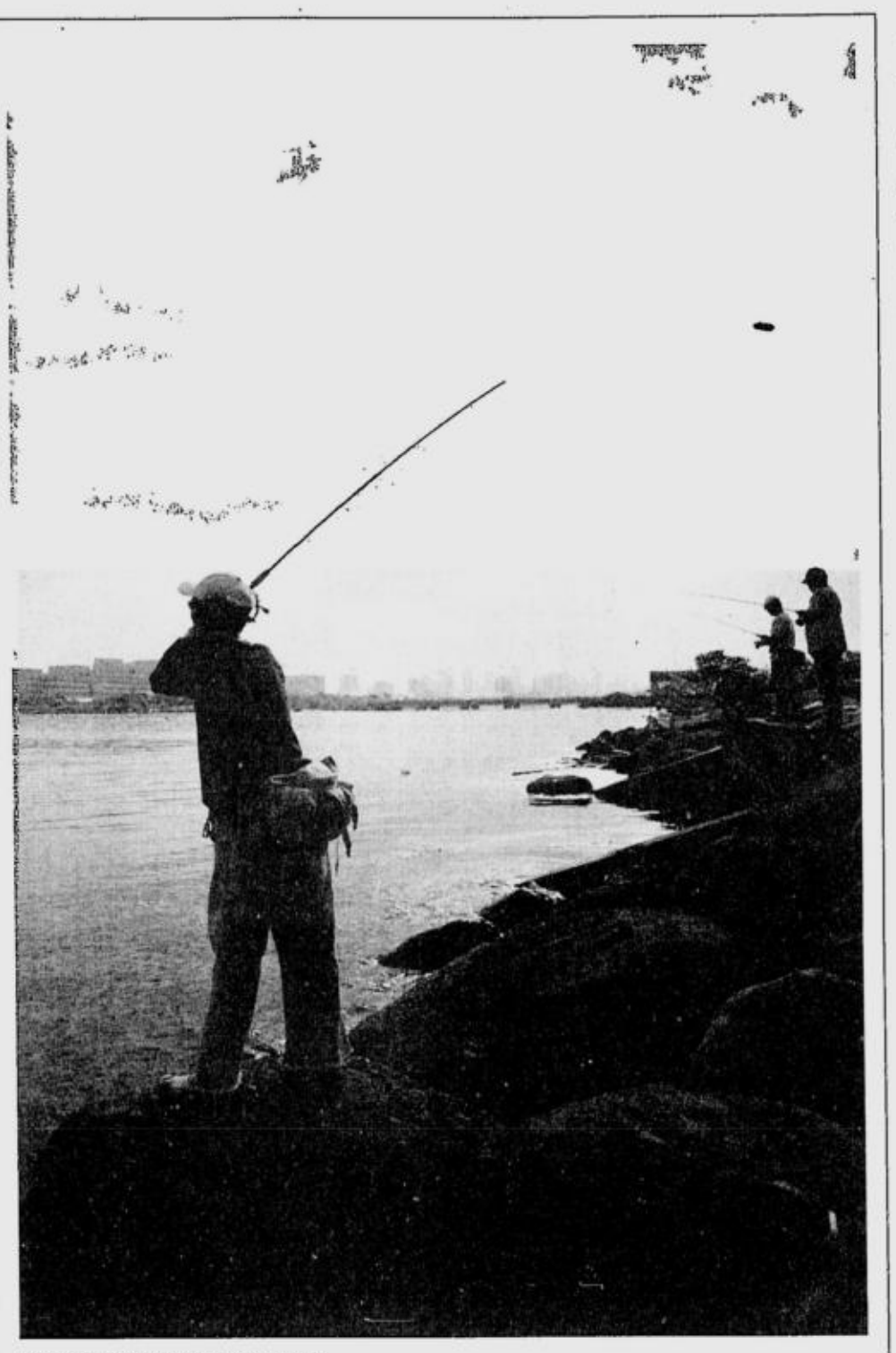
The 40-hour information technology (IT) training also taught them how to explore the Internet as well as how to create and send out e-mail.

New hope

"The city government hopes that with their newly-acquired skills, the inmates will be able to rebuild their lives upon their release," Makati Sanggunian Kabataan (SK) chair Christine Mercado said in a statement.

The in-house training program in the MCJ began in January through the efforts of the SK, the city-supported employment program Makati Training Placement and Livelihood Consortia and the Inmates' Welfare and Development Unit, the MCJ's rehabilitation arm.

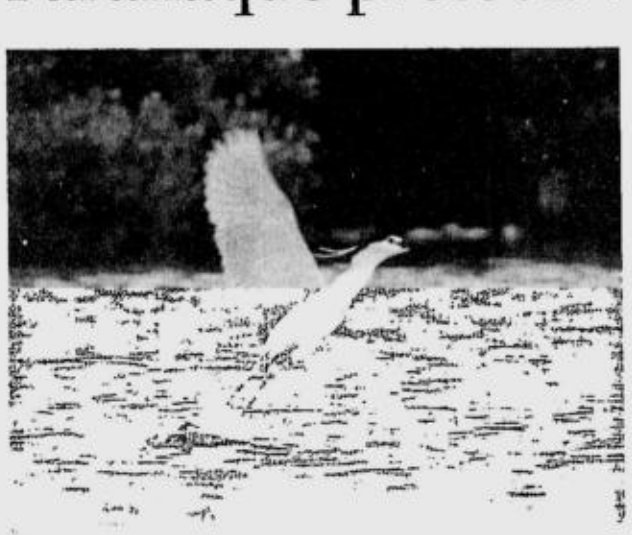
Those who completed the program automatically qualify for "higher level training" such as web page design and graphic design, according to City Hall.



LOOKING FOR A CATCH
A man tries his luck at catching fish in Manila Bay early yesterday morning. He has competition though. Some illegal fishermen also fish in the bay, using dynamite which kills small fish and other aqua life.
REM ZAMORA

Parañaque protects . . .

From page A23



AN ORDINANCE proposed by the City Council calls for the protection of Parañaque's fine-feathered visitors.
PHOTOS BY EDWIN BACASMAS

on first reading two years ago.

"When we followed it up with the city council, they said the ordinance was still on the committee level," Orozca said, adding that the ordinance, if approved on final reading, would help expedite negotiations with PEA.

Recently, the City Tourism Office has discovered that a fishpond at the back of SM Sucat has become a feeding ground for egrets and raptors.

As early as 5 a.m., the pond would be dotted with nearly a hundred egrets that feed on crustaceans coming from the Las Piñas River.

Erick Ferrer, city tourism operations assistant, said the fishpond was part of the roughly 300 salt beds that dominated the coastal communities of Parañaque and Las Piñas.

But the salt beds that were converted into fishponds during the rainy season have been swallowed up by buildings and subdivisions over the years.

Construction threatens egrets

Ferrer said that the ongoing expansion of C-5, linking the cities of Parañaque and Las Piñas to other localities, might encroach on the fishpond, a privately-owned property. The road construction is just a few meters away from the egret sanctuary.

"Development really poses a great threat to these birds' natural habitat," he pointed out as he hoped that city council would speed up the approval of the ordinance in order to protect "Freedom Island" from hunters and other persons who may damage the bird sanctuary.

"We can't shoo them away because sometimes, even our personnel are not allowed to enter the property," Orozca said.

Ferrer added that he was optimistic that the council would soon act on the ordinance "because we want the future generation to see birds in the skies rather than in cages."

133 minors apprehended in Makati for violating curfew

By Jocelyn R. Uy

THE STREETS OF MAKATI CITY are no place for children at nighttime.

The local government announced the other day that barangay watchmen apprehended 133 individuals last month for violating an ordinance which imposed a curfew on individuals aged 18 and below.

Under the ordinance, minors in the city should be safely inside their houses from 10 p.m. up to 4 a.m.

Those apprehended were detained overnight at special holding areas in barangay halls and released the following day to their parents or guardians.

According to the Makati Information and Community Relations Division, the barangay with the most number of curfew violators was Barangay Comembo with 67; followed by Valenzuela, 27; Sta. Cruz, 22; San Isidro, 8; Pitogo, 7 and South Cembo, 6.

Mayor Jejomar Binay, in a statement the other day, reiterated the need for minors to be kept out of the streets at nighttime to prevent incidents of juvenile violence involving fraternity and teenage gangs.

This was also the reason for the revival of the ordinance in 1998 during the term of Binay's wife, Elenita. The ordinance was first enacted in 1963 through Municipal Ordinance 27.

METROBRIEFS

Homes for homeless

ABOUT 78 families in Las Piñas City would soon have permanent homes, City Hall said yesterday. The families, residents of the 2,708-sq m San Roque compound in Barangay Pamplona Uno, would soon receive their land certificates after Mayor Imelda Aguilar and property owners Aurora Trinidad and Susan Sarao signed an agreement to transfer ownership of the lot through a community mortgage program. Under the agreement, the compound would be spruced up into a "subdivision-like" community. Roads, alleys, drainage systems, health and daycare centers would also be constructed immediately to provide a safe and convenient environment for the residents. The local government's "Lupa Para sa Mamamayan" program has already benefited about 23,000 informal settlers in the city, records of the Urban Poor Affairs Office showed.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Facelift for stadium

A "FACELIFT" awaits the Amoranto Sports Complex in Quezon City, as city officials begin preparing for the conversion of the stadium into a world-class sports facility. The modernization of the sports complex in Barangay Paligsahan is set to begin soon, particularly the rehabilitation of the multi-purpose hall, according to city officials. "The Amoranto multi-purpose hall ... should no longer look like a mere basketball court," said Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. Aside from being the site of sports activities, the hall shall also serve as a stage where theatrical plays can be performed, he added.

DJ Yap

DID YOU KNOW

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines, which conducted its College Admission Test over the weekend, was created on June 18, 1908 by Act No. 1870 of the First Philippine Legislature. It is the first nonsectarian and co-educational (co-ed) university in the country. UP now has campuses in Diliman (the flagship campus), Los Baños, Manila, Visayas, Mindanao and Baguio. It also has an Open University which provides distance learning to interested students.

Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

PNP intelligence chief likely to become Metro police chief

By Luige A. del Puerto

THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL POlice's number two man has virtually confirmed that Director Reynaldo Varilla, currently the police's intelligence czar, will replace Director Vidal Querol as chief of the National Capital Region Police Office.

Querol is retiring early this month.

Asked who would assume Querol's post, Deputy Director Avelino Razon Jr., the PNP's second highest official, mentioned only the name of Varilla, although he said there were "some other candidates."

Told that his remark more or less indicated Varilla's impending designation as Metro Manila police chief, Razon said, "Probably, it is the correct interpretation."

Varilla's assumption to one of the PNP's most coveted field posts is expected to trigger a reshuffle which would affect at least five units.

Assuming Varilla gets the post, this is how other officers will move in the hierarchy, according to Razon:

Director Alejandrino Lapinid, now the chief of the Directorate for Research and Development, will replace Varilla as head of the Directorate for Intelligence.

Chief Supt. Ernesto Belen, current chief of the PNP Crime Laboratory, will take over Lapinid's post.

Chief Supt. August Angcanan, the deputy chief of the Directorate for Plans, will head the PNP Crime Laboratory.

The director of the Eastern Police District (EPD), Chief Supt. Charlemagne Alejandrino, is expected to take over Angcanan's post at the planning office.

On the other hand, Chief Supt. Luiso Ticman, executive officer of the Directorate for Plans, has been recommended to head the EPD which covers the cities of Mandaluyong, Pasig and Marikina and the town of San Juan.

Director Jesus Versoza, one of the officers eyed to replace Querol, will remain as chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group, the police's investigative arm, Razon said.

The CIDG is in the thick of the probe to unmask the alleged financiers and civilian backers of the attempt to unseat President Macapagal-Arroyo last February.

"There is much work now on the desk of Director Versoza," Razon said.

Razon also disclosed that the Senior Officers Placement and Promotion Board has passed a resolution recommending three officers to head the Manila Police District, a plum post.

They included Chief Supt. Roberto "Boysi" Rosales, Senior Supt. Nilo dela Cruz and Chief Supt. Luisito Palmera.

But the police would have to wait for the nod of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

PNP chief Director General Oscar Calderon has already written to Atienza about the short list.

"He (Atienza) has not yet acted on the recommendation," Razon said.

For the meantime, Senior Supt. Danilo Abarsoza, the deputy of the MPD, has been designated as officer in charge of the district following the retirement of Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Go indigenous, doctor tells breastfeeding moms

By Margaux C. Ortiz

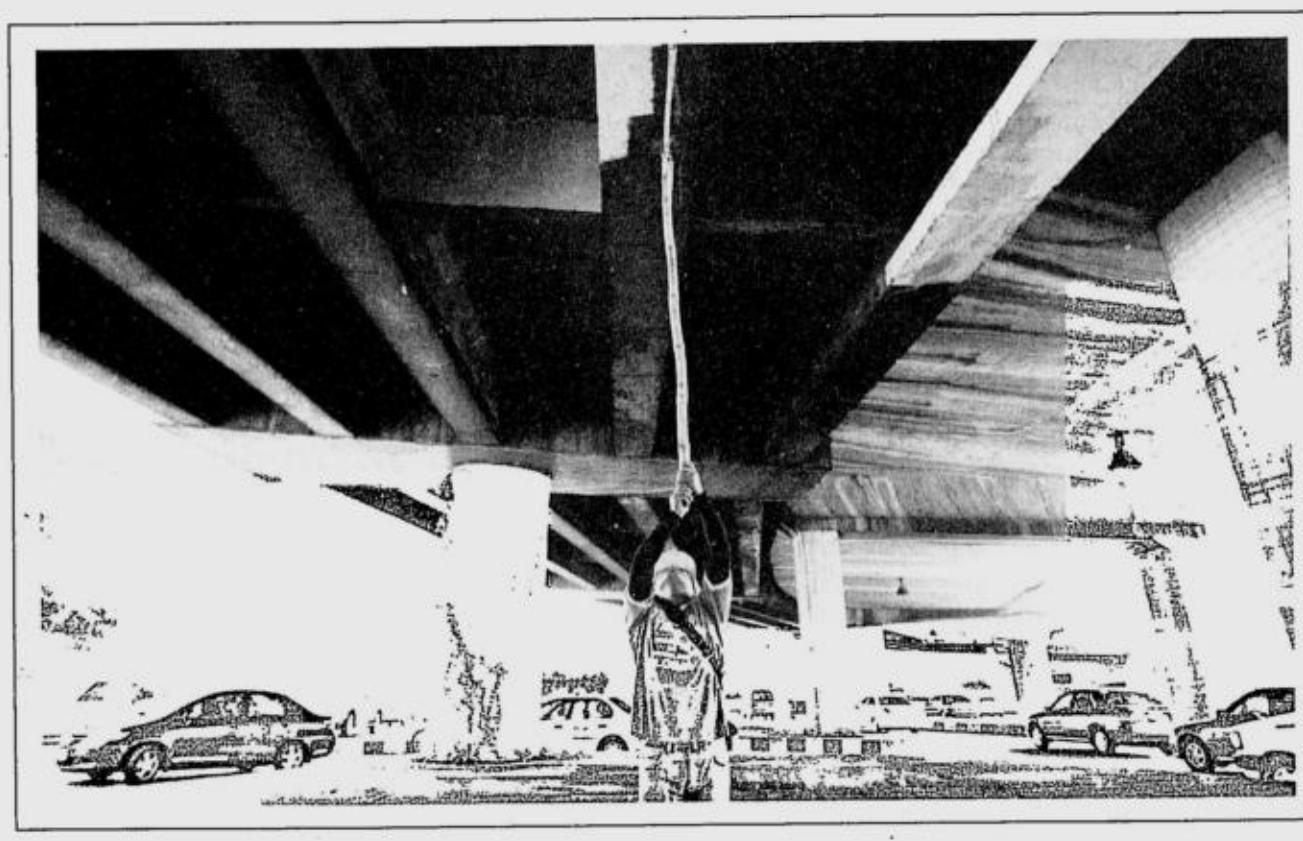
A NONGOVERNMENT ORGAnization is now pushing for the revival of indigenous practices during breastfeeding activities.

Lactation consultant and Children for Breastfeeding, Inc. founding chair Dr. Elvira Henares-Esguerra has stressed that a woman and her baby should eat indigenous foods, especially vegetables rich in calcium.

"Calcium from cows' milk is common in cold places, not in tropical countries like ours, where indigenous foods are more abundant," Esguerra explained during a recent lecture in celebration of Breastfeeding Week.

The doctor enumerated examples of calcium-rich local vegetables and grains like unpolished rice, *kulitis* (slender or spineless amaranth), *kamote ugat*, *kasubha* (native saffron), *himbabao*, sesame seeds, *bulaklak ng saging* (banana blossom), *saluyot* (jute leaves), *singkamas* (turnips), *okra* and *talong* (eggplant).

She also said that indigenous preparations like *pinakbet* and *dinengdeng* from the northern part of the country, the Tagalog region's *bulanglang* and *sinigang*, and *laswa*, *law-uy* and *nilapwaan* from the southern areas could complement breastfeeding.



SPRUCING UP EDSA A worker of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority applies a fresh coat of paint to the underbelly of the Edsa flyover in Gil Puyat Avenue, Makati City. The MMDA is currently repainting all flyovers on Edsa. LYN RILLON

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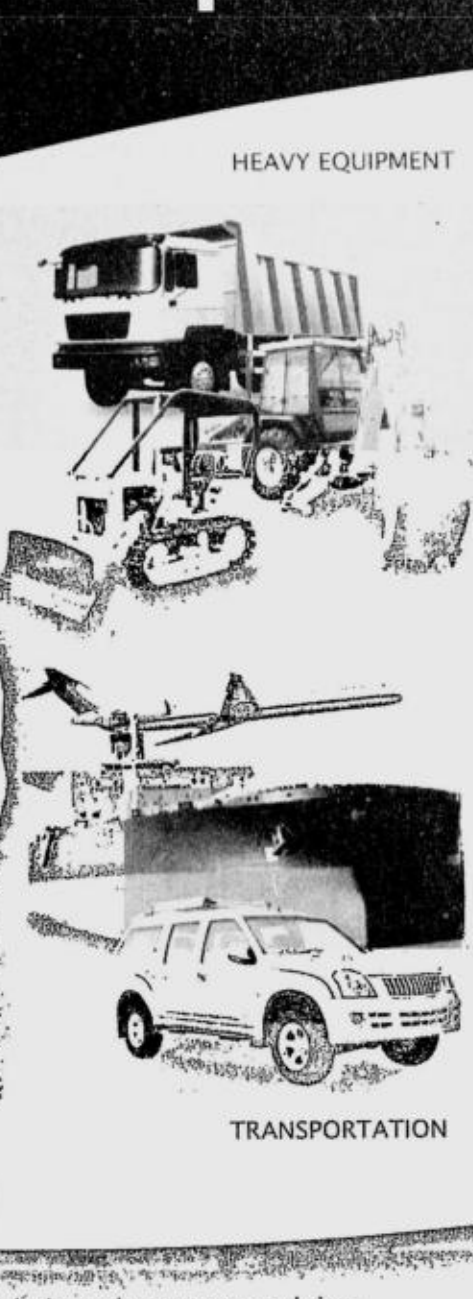
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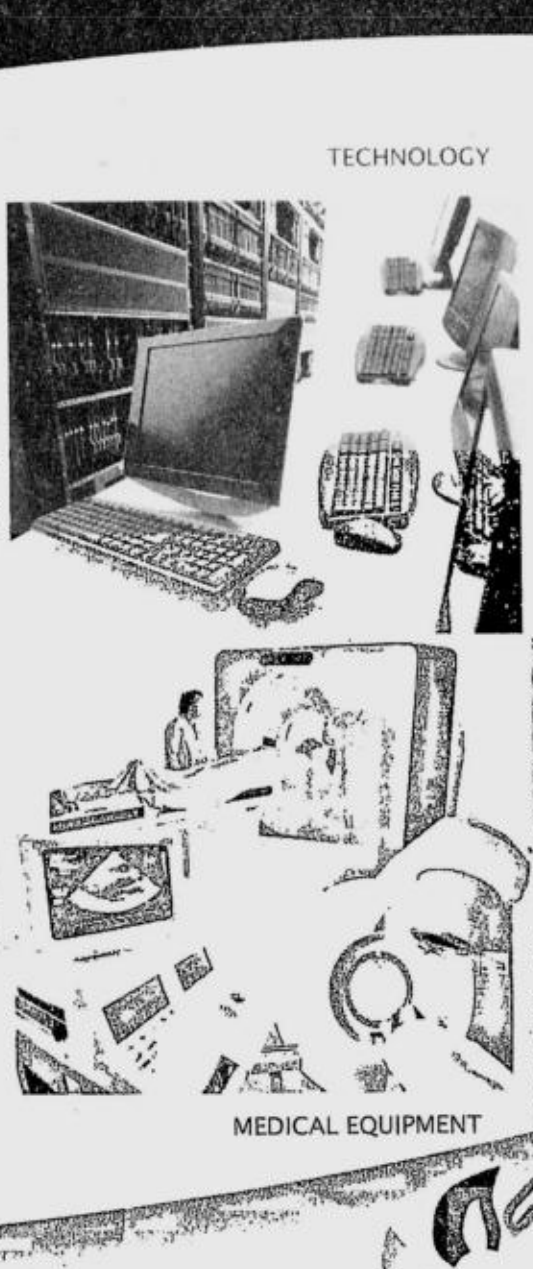
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DARK CLOUDS ON HORIZON
A man fishes along Victoria Harbor under the background of a stormy Hong Kong skyline, Aug. 3. A new law threatens civil liberties in the island. AFP

Hong Kong gets more power to spy on citizens

HONG KONG—HONG KONG'S LEGISLATURE on Sunday passed a new law giving authorities more power to tap phones and conduct other surveillance measures, a move critics fear will curtail civil liberties in the former British colony now ruled by China.

Hong Kong's pro-democracy opposition boycotted the final vote as the marathon debate that began Wednesday ended early Sunday morning, after a proposed provision to reconsider the law later was defeated.

The surveillance bill passed 32-0. The opposition holds 25 seats in the 60-member legislature. The bill had been largely expected to pass with backing from pro-government lawmakers who control the body.

Critics have expressed worries that the new surveillance legislation will empower police officers to eavesdrop on political opponents, although the government has insisted it won't.

Apart from phone tapping, the bill also covers interception of mail and e-mail, as well as physical surveillance, such as undercover infiltration.

Journalist groups fear authorities can now intercept conversations between reporters and their sources, or lawyers and their clients.

Opposition legislator James To said the government was unresponsive to critics' worries.

"This was like debating with a wall," he grumbled during the final hours of debate.

"The passage of this bill will affect us greatly. The level of disappointment we feel isn't a normal level of disappointment," said another opposition lawmaker, Margaret Ng.

Hong Kong Secretary for Security Ambrose Lee said the new law is crucial for the territory's public safety.

"I must emphasize that this piece of legislation is very important to maintain the good law and order of Hong Kong," he said after the bill's passage.

"I wish to assure the residents of Hong Kong that the law now is a good balance between effective law enforcement on the one hand and the protection of privacy on the other," Lee added.

The law requires surveillance operations to be approved by judges appointed by Hong Kong's leader. Opposition legislators argue such a system of checks isn't independent enough.

Among other safeguards, the law creates an oversight commissioner, also appointed by the territory's leader, and authorizes the official to order the government to pay compensation to individuals whose privacy rights have been violated.

Another area of concern is that surveillance conducted by undercover officers in person, as opposed to electronic surveillance that involves devices, only requires departmental approval, not by the panel of judges.

A proposed national security law also seen as a threat to freedoms was shelved after half a million people protested in 2003. *AP*

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INQUIRER

After 27 years, Khmer Rouge inquiry begins

CAMBODIAN boys walk by the grave of Khmer Rouge supremo Pol Pot in Anlong Veng, northwest of Phnom Penh, July 24. AFP

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA—More than 27 years after the mass killings and after nearly a decade of wrangling between Cambodia and the United Nations, formal proceedings have begun against surviving leaders of the brutal Khmer Rouge regime.

On July 10, a special prosecutor's office opened its investigation into one of the last century's most sustained atrocities, in which 1.7 million people died from 1975 to 1979 through torture, systematic killings, overwork, starvation and disease.

A first shipment of 383,149 pages of evidence, contained on 524 reels of microfilm, was delivered to the prosecutors on July 17.

But even if a loose timetable holds, it will be a year and a half before the first defendant is brought before a mixed Cambodian and foreign tribunal. Because of limits on time, space and money, few are likely to face trial on charges of complicity in the deaths of as many as one-fourth of the country's citizens.

The tribunal proceedings face uncertainties and hurdles of both procedure and politics that could slow or stymie them. The United Nations has given the tribunal a budget of $56.3 million for a three-year process that began with the investigation. But it may last longer. There is also a race against mortality as aging suspects die off and those who survive grow sicker and more frail. The Khmer Rouge leader, Pol Pot, died in 1998 at 73. The military commander Ta Mok died July 21. He was believed to be 80.

Of the four most prominent figures remaining, three are in their late 70s and report having medical problems. Only one, Kaing Khek Iev, also known as Duch, the commander of the torture chamber Tuol Sleng, is in custody.

The tribunal was established by an agreement between Cambodia and the United Nations in 2003 that grew out of a Cambodian request in 1997 for help.

It has been controversial from the beginning, with Cambodia insisting that its shaky legal system form the basis for the complex tribunal.

"The process is sure to be flawed," said Diane Orentlicher, a professor of international law at the Washington College of Law at American University. "That's not really in question. But these trials are, to point out the obvious, the last chance that surviving victims have for justice." *New York Times*

Zawahiri says Egypt militants have joined al-Qaida

CAIRO, EGYPT—AL-QAIDA'S NO. 2 leader announced in a new videotape aired Saturday that an Egyptian militant group has joined the terror network.

It was the first time that al-Qaida has announced a branch in Egypt, the Arab world's largest nation. The Egyptian group, Gamaa Islamiya, is apparently a revived version of a militant group of the same name that waged a campaign of violence in Egypt during the 1990s but was crushed in a government crackdown.

"We announce to the Islamic nation the good news of the unification of a great faction of the knights of the Gamaa Islamiya ... with the al-Qaida group," Ayman al-Zawahiri, the deputy leader of al-Qaida said in the videotape aired on the Al-Jazeera news network.

Al-Zawahiri said the Egyptian group was led by Mohammed al-Islambouli, the younger brother of Khaled al-Islambouli, the militant who assassinated Egyptian President Anwar al-Sadat in 1979 and was later executed.

The video also included a statement by Mohammed al-Hakayma, identified as another top leader of the revived Gamaa. The statement showed al-Hakayma talking in a grove of palm trees in a landscape resembling southern Egypt, the Gamaa's former heartland.

Mohammed al-Islambouli left Egypt in the mid-1980s and was believed to have been in Afghanistan working with al-Qaida-leader Osama bin Laden, said Diaa Rashwan, an Egyptian expert on militant groups.

It was not clear how much of a following the new version of Gamaa Islamiya has on the ground in Egypt. Its previous incarnation was largely eliminated by the government crackdown, and its leaders later announced a truce from prison. It has not claimed any attacks since the late 1990s.

Rashwan said al-Zawahiri's claim was likely just propaganda.

"This is media talk from Ayman al-Zawahiri. The Gamaa Islamiya has its own leadership and they said they have already rejected joining al-Qaida in the past," he said. "Gamaa Islamiya has no command outside Egypt. They have dissolved in Egypt."

Egypt has seen a string of terror bombings against tourist resorts in the Sinai Peninsula since October 2004, killing 98 people. Egyptian authorities have said those attacks were carried out by a group calling itself Monotheism and Jihad, with links to Palestinian militants.

Many experts believe Monotheism and Jihad is at least inspired by al-Qaida and may have some operational links, but the Egyptian government has not announced any connection.

The excerpts of the video played by Al-Jazeera did not mention any imminent threats of attacks in Egypt.

Al-Zawahiri is Egyptian and was once a member of Islamic Jihad, the other main Egyptian militant group that led violence in the 1990s alongside the original Gamaa Islamiya. *AP*

AL-ZAWAHIRI AFP

Hiroshima marks A-bomb anniversary

HIROSHIMA, JAPAN—THE Japanese city of Hiroshima marked the 61st anniversary of the world's first atomic attack on Sunday with renewed calls for a nuclear-free world.

Some 45,000 people recited silent prayers at 8:15 a.m. (2315 GMT Saturday), the exact moment in 1945 when a single US bomb instantly killed more than 140,000 people and fatally injured tens of thousands of others with radiation or horrific burns.

Government officials and foreign guests from 35 countries laid wreaths before a memorial to the dead against the backdrop of the famous A-bomb dome, a former exhibition hall burned to a skeleton by the bomb's heat.

The peal of a bell echoed at the memorial park, where survivors mostly in their 70s or 80s also gathered, escorted by their children or grandchildren under a scorching sun to say prayers for the dead.

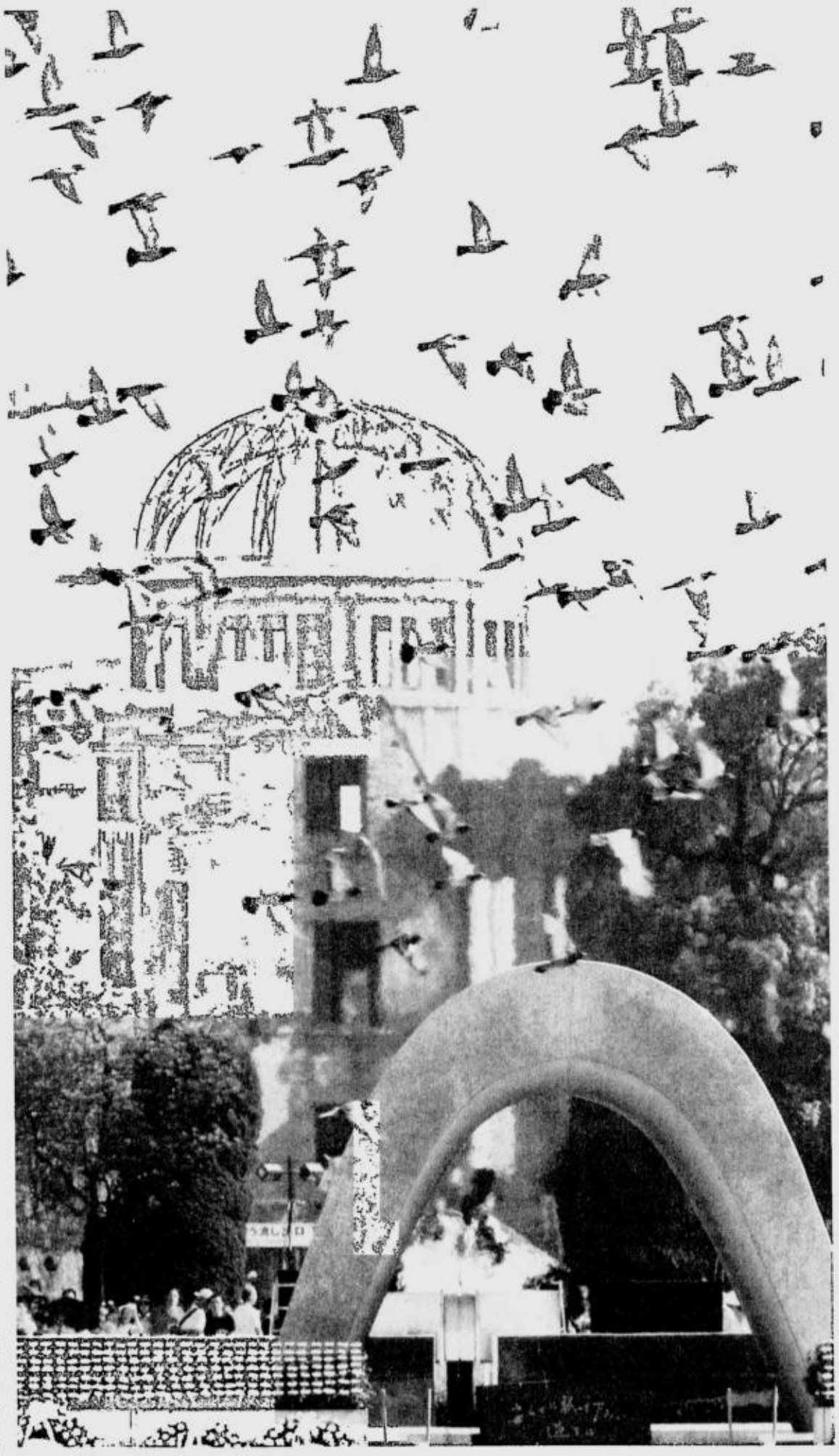
"Sixty-one years later, the number of nations enamored of evil and enslaved by nuclear weapons is increasing," Hiroshima Mayor Tadatoshi Akiba said in a speech.

Akiba said his city and atomic bomb survivors have long sought the abolition of nuclear weapons. "Yet the world's political leaders continue to ignore these voices," he said.

"I call on the Japanese government to ... forcefully insist that the nuclear-weapon states negotiate in good faith for nuclear disarmament," Akiba said.

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi said: "We promise to continue leading the international society to the goal of abolishing nuclear weapons and achieving permanent peace." The Hiroshima bombing was followed by the dropping of a second atomic bomb on the city of Nagasaki on Aug. 9, leaving another 70,000 more dead. Japan surrendered on Aug. 15, ending World War II.

The anniversary of the attacks comes amid growing tension in the region with North Korea posing a missile threat and sticking to its nuclear ambitions. *AFP*



DOVES fly over the cenotaph of A-bomb victims during the 61st anniversary celebration of the world's first nuclear attack, at the Peace Memorial Park, in Hiroshima, Aug. 6. The US bombing in 1945 killed about 140,000 people, almost half the city, either immediately or in the months that followed from radiation injuries or horrific burns. AFP

Sri Lanka rebels say forces will pull back

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA—AFTER days of heavy fighting, the Tamil Tiger rebels said on Saturday that they had ended their offensive against Sri Lankan security forces in the east and were retreating to their original positions.

"Our objective of the mission, with a defensive character, was accomplished and our forces returned to their positions" in keeping with the 2002 cease-fire, Irasaiah Ilanthirayan, the Tigers' military spokesperson was quoted as saying, on the pro-rebel TamilNet Web site. "The operation aimed at giving a military pressure was speedily carried out and ceased the same way, as our national leader was highly concerned of the humanitarian situation," he said.

The government said that it had not been officially informed of an end to the hostilities, which have left scores dead, including civilians, but said that it had retaken control of the town of Muttur, the scene of intense fighting this week.

However, there was no resolution of the dispute over a nearby irrigation canal, which triggered the recent clashes, the worst violence since the Sri Lankan government and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam signed the 2002 cease-fire aimed at ending two decades of civil war.

The military said that it had lost 17 personnel in the latest fighting, while the Tigers reported to have lost 32.

More than 30 civilians were killed in the cross-fire, some while sheltering in schools and others on the street while fleeing attacks.

The Sri Lanka Monitoring Mission said it was trying to investigate reports that 100 civilians had been massacred by the Tigers as they tried to escape the fighting.

"We have heard about a pile of civilian bodies in the outskirts of Muttur," said Robert Nilsson, who accompanied the mission chief to the area on Saturday. *New York Times*

'Dead zone' reappears off the Oregon coast

FOR THE FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW, unusual wind patterns off the coast of Oregon have produced a large "dead zone," an area so low in oxygen that fish and crabs suffocate.

This dead zone is unlike those in the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere, which result from fertilizer, sewage or runoff from hog or poultry operations carried by rivers. The Oregon zone appears when the wind generates strong currents carrying nutrient-rich but oxygen-poor water from the deep sea to the surface near shore, a process called upwelling.

The nutrients encourage the growth of plankton, which eventually dies and falls to the ocean floor. Bacteria there consume the plankton, using up oxygen.

Jane Lubchenco, a marine biologist at Oregon State University, said the phenomenon did not appear to be linked to recurring El Niño or La Niña currents or to long-term cycles of ocean movements. That made Lubchenco wonder if climate change might be a factor, she said, adding, "There is no other cause, as far as we can determine."

The dead zone, which appears in late spring and lasts a matter of weeks, has quadrupled in size since it first appeared in 2002 and this year covers about 1,235 square miles, an area about as large as Rhode Island, Lubchenco said.

The zone dissipates when winds shift. It is not clear what effect the dead zone may have on future fish or crab catches, Lubchenco said. So far, she said, the dead zone has not formed until the Dungeness crab season has been nearly over.

Hal Weeks, a marine ecologist who leads the Marine Habitat Project, said the formation of the low-oxygen, or hypoxic, areas had so far caused "localized disruptions" in fishing but no overall decline in catches and no interference with recreational fishing.

In 2002 when the dead zone first appeared, Lubchenco said, she and other researchers dismissed it as an interesting anomaly. "But now, five years in a row, we are beginning to think there has been some sort of fundamental change in ocean conditions off the West Coast," she said, possibly because of changes in the jet stream caused by global warming. *New York Times*

With eye on political reality, Bush takes a shorter vacation

CRAWFORD, TEXAS—THIS parched Texas cattle town, population 705, has been a haven for President Bush every August, an escape from the buttoned-down confines of Washington. Here, Bush can clear brush, ride his mountain bike along scrubby trails, curl up with a book or kick up his feet for an afternoon siesta.

But this year reality—in the form of the November midterm elections, the peace activist Cindy Sheehan and the legacy of Hurricane Katrina—has intruded on the president's summer vacation, cutting short his time at his 1,600-acre ranch.

Instead of parking here for the whole month, Bush, who arrived Thursday night, will spend just 10 nights before returning to the White House. During his stay, his aides are taking pains to present Bush as deeply engaged in world events; on Saturday, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is scheduled to arrive to brief him on the Middle East.

"It basically reflects busy times and a busy schedule," said Dan Bartlett, counselor to Bush, explaining the abbreviated visit.

It also reflects a political decision made by Bush's advisers, and the president himself, to prevent a repeat of the public relations debacle of last August. That month began with highly publicized protests by Sheehan, whose son was killed in Iraq, and ended with the image of the president on vacation while New Orleans drowned, an image that helped start his slide in popularity.

So when summer planning time rolled around this year, the White House was determined to do something different.

"It was a political calculation that his advisers persuaded him that he needed to do, and I think he knew it," said one Republican with close ties to Bush, who would discuss internal White House decisions only if not quoted by name. He added, "I don't think he is resentful or angry or anything; I think he is resigned to it."

Scott Reed, a Republican strategist, said the new calendar was smart politics.

"This is a direct reflection of the debacle of last summer, where a perception became a reality that he was isolated down in Crawford," Reed said, adding: "I've always thought a month was a long time. Most families don't take a whole month off in the summer." *New York Times*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Mexico court rejects full recount

MEXICO CITY—A SEVEN-MEMber electoral tribunal on Saturday unanimously rejected a demand from the leftist candidate for president for a complete recount of votes in last month's election, setting the stage for more protests by thousands of people who have camped out in the capital claiming that the election was fraudulent.

Later in the day, the candidate, Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, a former Mexico City mayor who champions the cause of the poor, refused to accept the ruling. At a raucous rally in the Zocalo, the city's historic central square, he called on his followers to continue a campaign of civil disobedience in support of a full recount. He gave no hint of what the next move in that campaign would be.

"We demand that the magistrates rectify their decision because they have the ability and the moral responsibility to do it," he said, as a crowd of several thousand chanted "fraud, fraud."

During a two-hour morning session, the judges ordered that the votes in the July 2 election be recounted in only 11,839 of the 130,000 polling places. They rejected Lopez Obrador's argument that there was enough human error and, in some instances, enough evidence of fraud to warrant recounting all 41 million votes.

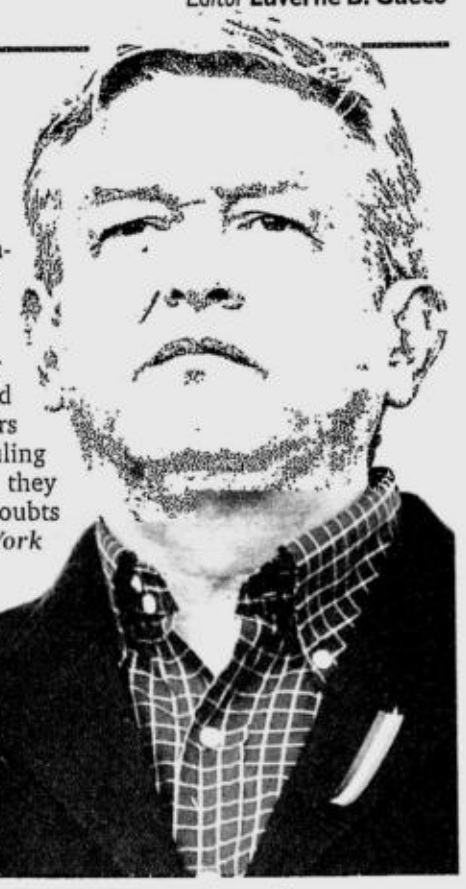
They also noted that his Party of the Democratic Revolution had failed to challenge the results in 70 electoral districts, and that under the law, those results must stand.

Last month, an official tally handed a narrow victory to Felipe Calderon, the conservative candidate from President Vicente Fox's governing National Action Party. The count showed Calderon won by 243,000 votes. Lopez Obrador has argued there were arithmetical errors in at least 72,000 polling places and evidence of fraud in about 600.

Over the last month, Lopez Obrador has said repeatedly he would not accept anything less than a full recount of the 41 million votes cast.

A spokesman for Lopez Obrador, Cesar Yanez, said the candidate was closeted with his closest advisers, hammering out a plan of action. His supporters have already blockaded the main artery of the capital, Avenida Reforma, for miles, tying up traffic and hurting businesses. In his speech, Lopez Obrador said he would unveil the next stage of the protest on Sunday morning.

Calderon, 43, a former energy minister, remained silent on Saturday. Lawyers for his party said the ruling seemed fair and that they hoped it would clear up doubts about the outcome. *New York Times News Service*



OBRADOR vows to continue street protests after ruling. REUTERS

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Castro to be back in weeks, Cuba VP says

CASTRO in September 2005 photo. AFP

HAVANA—AILING CUBAN LEADer Fidel Castro, described by sources as well enough to be eating and sitting up, could return to power in several weeks, Cuba's vice president said on Saturday.

Vice President Carlos Lage denied a newspaper report that the 79-year-old former guerrilla fighter who had surgery for internal bleeding and temporarily turned over power to brother Raul on Monday, is suffering from stomach cancer and has an unfavorable prognosis.

"Fidel has had to confront an operation and is recovering favorably. He does not have cancer," Lage told reporters during an official visit to Bolivia.

He said the longtime communist leader, who has not been seen in public since July 26, could reassume power from Raul "in several weeks." Lage's comments were the latest assurances by Cuban officials and allies that Castro had not lost his grip on the communist government he has run since sweeping into power in a 1959 revolution.

In Havana, where residents were stunned at Monday's announcement that the "Comandante" had provisionally given power to Raul Castro, 75, sources who had spoken to government officials said Fidel Castro was doing well for a man his age.

"I was told Fidel is doing better, he has eaten something and sat up," one source told Reuters, asking not to be identified.

Mid-level Communist Party officials were informed that Castro was out of intensive care and beginning to recover, a party source said in Santiago, Cuba's second largest city.

Bolivian President Evo Morales, in a speech to lawmakers in Sucre, Bolivia, with Lage in attendance, said Castro already "has recovered" from the operation.

"What is now lacking is that he return to running the country," said Morales, a Castro ally.

The statements followed a report by one of Brazil's top newspapers, Folha de S. Paulo, that Cuban officials told Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva and members of the ruling Workers' Party that Castro had a malignant stomach tumor and his condition was worse than has been publicly admitted. *Reuters*

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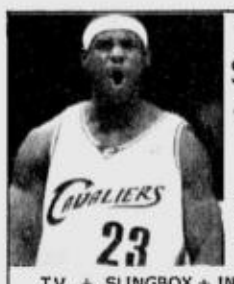

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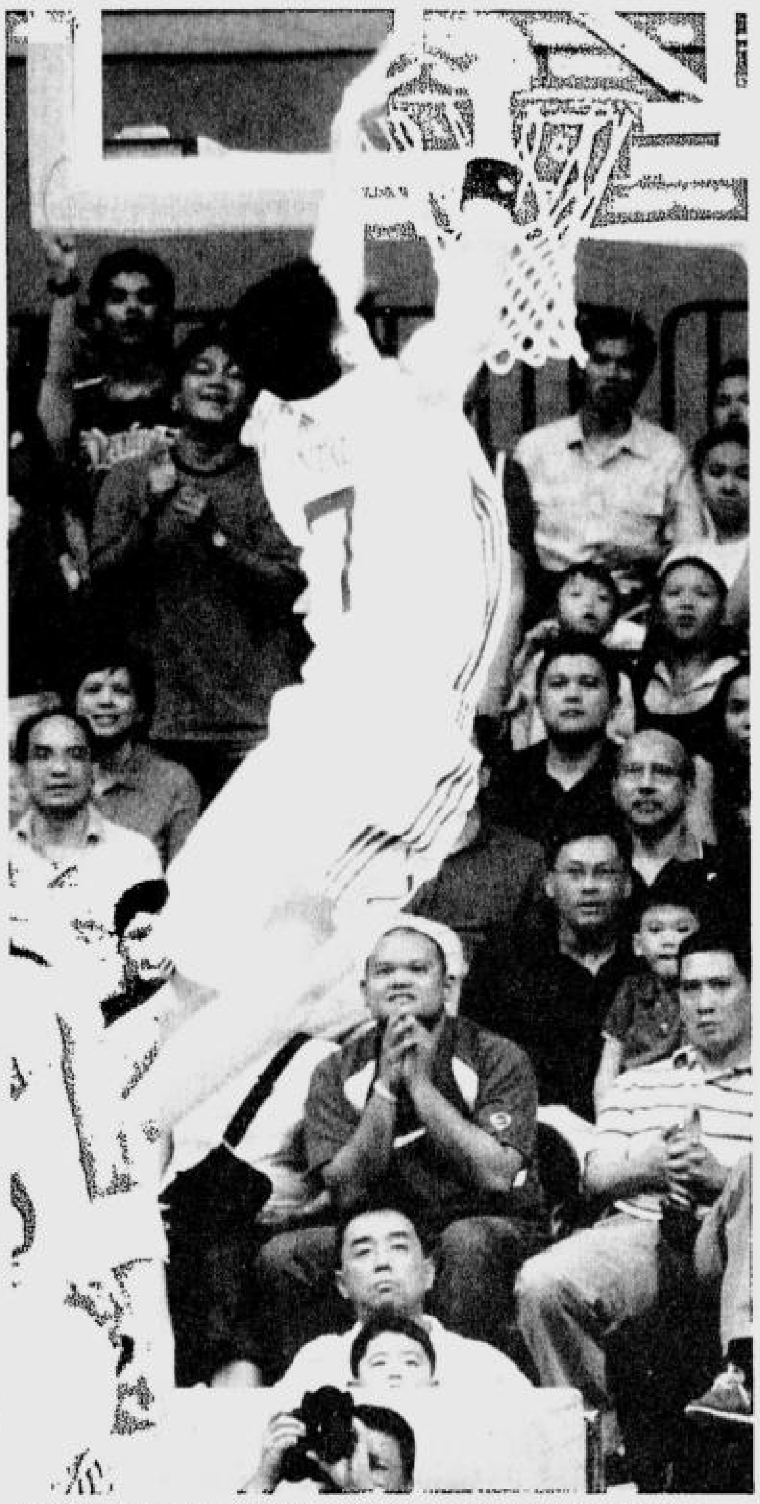
Eagles slam Tigers with blowout win


ATENEO'S TOP-SCORING JC Intal completes a breakaway slam against University of Santo Tomas. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE ATENEO BLUE EAGLES still could do nothing wrong.

Shocking their foes with an early scoring onslaught, the Eagles pulled off the season's most lopsided win—a 114-78 rout of the Santo Tomas Tigers—to sweep the first round of the UAAP men's basketball tournament yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Led by veteran JC Intal, the Eagles zoomed to a comfortable 63-36 halftime cushion from a 30-30 deadlock. Ateneo's 35 points in the second period was also the highest point production in a single quarter this season.

Intal shot 24 points and grabbed 10 rebounds to lead a solid performance by the Eagles' starting five, who all finished in double figures.

The six-game sweep came a day after the Blue Eaglets swept the first round in junior play. A three-division Ateneo title sweep loomed as the Lady Eagles also tote a league-leading 5-1 mark.

"We picked up the confidence from our win against UE," said coach Norman Black. "We went into this game telling ourselves that we will be in a track meet, knowing that UST is a running team. We just pushed the ball really hard, especially JC."

Back in their explosive form, the University of the East Warriors secured second spot after cruising to a 96-84 triumph over the University of the Philippines Maroons.

The Warriors got huge games from their stars led by Bonbon Custodio, who pumped in a game-high 20 points on top of eight rebounds and seven assists.

Apart from improving their record to 4-2, coach Dindo Pumaren said the victory showed his Warriors have started to recover from their early struggles.

"In the last two years, we've been successful in playing pressure defense," said Pumaren. "Our problem (in our two losses) was we competed in shooting contests."

The Warriors clamped down on Migs de Asis, the Maroons' rookie three-point specialist who finished with a personal season-low of six points.

The Maroons struggled from the field in the fourth period and joined the National Bulldogs, Far Eastern Tamaraws and the Tigers at 2-4.

The scores:

First Game (Srs)

UE 96—Custodio 20, Borboran 17, Arellano 16, Gregorio 14, Cañizares 12, Martinez 10, Llagas 3, Labagala 2, Espiritu 2, Thiele 0, Briones 0, Bandaying 0.

UP 84—Cruz 17, David 16, Epres 15, Co 10, Buyco 7, De Asis 6, Serios 4, Cacha 4, Maniego 3, Braganza 1, Sorongan 1.

Quarters: 24-20, 51-42, 76-70, 96-84

Second Game (Srs)

ATENEO 114—Intal 24, Tiu 19, Kramer 19, Escalona 15, Al-Hussaini 12, Reyes 6, Arao 6, Quimson 5, Escueta 3, Uichico 3, Monfort 2, Laterre 0, Barracoso 0.

UST 78—Duncil 24, Allera 14, Cortez 14, Cruz 9, Cuan 4, Ababou 4, Espiritu 3, Taylor 3, Canlas 2, Gile 0, Dizon 0.

Quarters: 28-27, 63-36, 90-47, 114-78

Miñoza ends up tied for 11th place

FRANKIE MIÑOZA SQUANDERED HIS title bid with a triple-bogey misadventure on the eighth hole but the Filipino ace still posted his best finish of 11th place yesterday in the Sun Chlorella Classic won by Hideto Tanihara in Hokkaido, Japan.

Just four shots off the lead after three rounds, Miñoza put himself out of the championship picture when he hit the turn at 40, although he fought back with a 34 on the back nine for a two-over-par 74, his worst score in four days.

Miñoza, 46, figured in a five-way tie for 11th at 288, even par in Hokkaido's Otaru Country Club and five shots off the winning score of Tanihara, who shot just a 72 but still won by one.

Miñoza, winner of six titles in the lucrative Japanese Tour, won 2.858 million yen (about P1.295 million) and moved to 44th in the money list with earnings of 11,798,104 yen in 11 events.

MIÑOZA

Latvia storms past fatigued SMC-RP

DOHA, QATAR—THE FATIGUE factor coming into play, elimination round topnotcher Latvia scored an easy 118-70 win over SMC-Pilipinas Saturday in the semifinals of the Al-Emadi International Basketball Championship at the Al-Gharafa Sports Club Hall here.

The Latvians thus earned a trip to the championship match Sunday opposite African champion Angola, which downed Qatar in the other semifinal, 75-62.

The Filipinos actually battled Latvia on equal footing in the early minutes and trailed by only three after the first 10 minutes of play, 25-28. But coach Chot Reyes' wards, who were playing their fourth game in four nights, faded soon after, and the Latvians scored on easy transition baskets en route to a 63-46 bulge at the half.

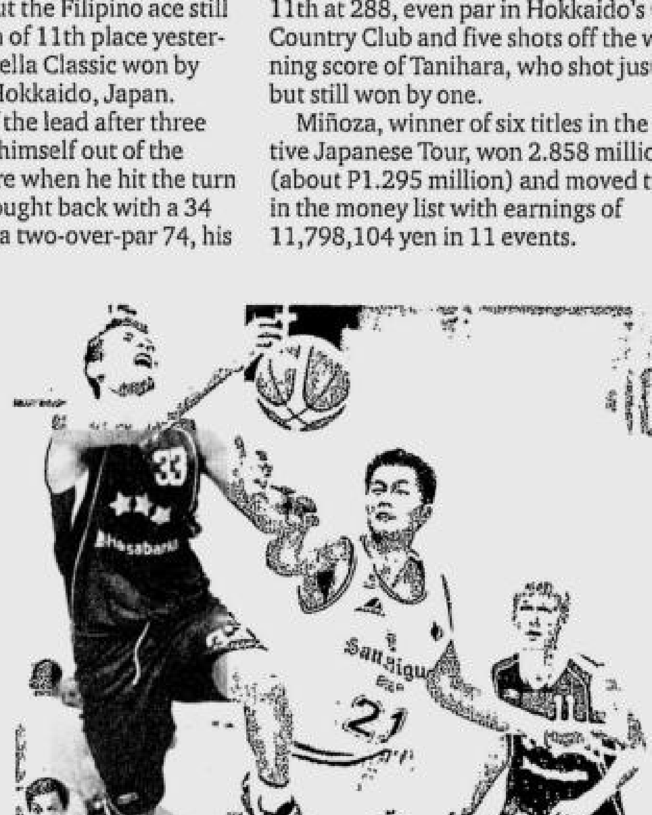
SMC-Pilipinas plays Qatar on Sunday for third place. In their elimination round faceoff, the hosts won 77-58 after Reyes was ejected on two technical fouls.

The scores:

LATVIA 118—Helmanis 22, Ciprus 17, Buskevics 13, Timermanis 12, Vtols 11, K. Valters 11, Grafs 8, Jahovics 8, Vecelous 6, Blums 4, S. Valters 4, Janicenoks 2.

SMC-RP 70—Miller 13, Pena 11, Pennisi 11, Tenorio 7, Raymundo 6, Miranda 5, Reavis 4, Mamaril 4, Santos 4, Canaleta 3, Yeo 2, Fonacier 0.

Quarters: 28-25, 63-46, 97-59, 118-70


SAN MIGUEL-RP's Kerby Raymundo fouls a driving Karel Janicenoks (left) of Latvia during their lopsided game. AFP

Fil-Japanese bags bronze in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH—TOMOHIKO Hoshina gave the Philippines a decent start in the 15th Vietnam International judo tournament on Saturday, capturing the bronze medal after dominating Chinese-Taipei's Chen Pin-yon at the Army Indoor Stadium here.

The 19-year-old Fil-Japanese could not sustain an impressive start and lost to Japanese Keiji Sawa in his second match before chalking up that victory for the Philippines' only medal on Day 1 of this Class A tournament.

The RP team missed the chance to bag two more bronzes after Oliver Franco and 23rd SEA Games silver medalist Nancy Quillotes fell to separate foes.

The secret behind archery's 'secret success'

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

THIS IS A CONTINUATION OF THE amusing success story of a national archer who, after being excluded from the Philippine team, went to Malaysia on her own and eventually emerged the top performer for the national team.

For the record, national archery officials claimed they did nothing officially wrong.

"Ms Amaya Paz was not included in the list of participants whose expenses were shouldered by the PSC due to her inability to meet some of the criteria ... like participation in the 2006 Philippine Olympic Festival National Target Archery Championship held at the Subic Bay Freefort June 12-24, 2006," explained Dr. Lenora Fe S. Brawner, president of the National Archery Association of the Philippines.

In fact, explained Brawner in a letter to the INQUIRER, they were "definitely very happy about the victory of the young lady archer who garnered three gold medals, three silver medals at the recently concluded 2nd Asian Grand Prix at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

* * *

For the record, the father of the young archer, Jaime "JP" Paz, did not complain with this reporter. The sketchy details on the amusing adventure of twenty-year-old Amaya Paz, a university scholar at UP, were gathered through a conversation with a Batangueño friend who wondered why there had been nothing about the big victory of the archer in the papers.

For the record, JP Paz came to us only on the day the column appeared to clarify that he and his family never begrudged the NAAP for having excluded Amaya from the list of participants in the KL Grand Prix.

The archer's father said they were not seeking any reimbursement (of the expenses),adding they have also spent for other foreign stints of Amaya, which obviously helped hone her into a world-class archer.

* * *

Amaya, explained her father, has requested that her name not be dragged into the developing "secret success" story, which has drawn the amusement of many sports fans.

For the record, the PSC acted immediately and offered to reimburse Amaya's expenses for her Malaysian stint upon reading the details of her triumph in that said column.

Amaya had to be excluded from team members financed by the PSC after she suffered a freak accident (she tripped on a chair at home) last April 29 that resulted into her right hand being put in a cast.

For the record, she wrote a letter to the PSC on July 5, thru the NAAP president, to "request inclusion in the list of athletes to be sent by the PSC to Malaysia."

In that letter, Amaya explained she had been cleared by her doctor (Rodrigo Angelo Ong) for immediate competition.

"It's been more than a month since I started regular training. I even go beyond my regular training hours. I believe that I am now in my competition form and I am very confident that, if given the chance, I will be able to represent our country well in Malaysia," Amaya explained in her letter.

* * *

For the record, the NAAP, without having to claim it knew its athletes best, did nothing officially wrong. Amaya, to repeat, failed to meet some of the criteria.

Of course, there's also nothing wrong if people have started to wonder why an athlete, who had no place in the national delegation, was quickly included in the RP team delegation once the need arose.

For the record, there was no evident effort to keep Amaya's sweet success a secret.

Explained the NAAP head: "Mr Clyde Mariano of the Bulletin Today was send (sic) by the PSC to cover the Asian Archery Grand Prix and all results were published in the Bulletin, Tempo and some tabloid newspapers."

* * *

Fine. But they've also started asking if Brawner was "definitely very happy" about Amaya's success.

Here's why: In explaining their failure to fully publicize the Paz triumph, Brawner also said that, "By airing their complaints directly to you, the father of Ms Paz had pre-empted, at least partly, our intentions to have some media publicity on her three gold medals."

For the record, Amaya Paz completed her victories in Malaysia at the end of the Grand Prix July 27. That column on her "secret success" came out Aug. 2.

For the record, there were a good five days from the time Amaya Paz had completed her victories in Malaysia to the time the critical column appeared.

Nothing wrong with the belated acknowledgement; although this would also show that the NAAP has missed the bulls-eye, again.

Here's hoping Amaya Paz gets a timely award for patriotic persistence.

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Knights take on Altas hoping to catch idle Lions

DEFENDING CHAMpion Letran tries to keep up with idle leader San Beda even as Philippine Christian University seeks to fortify its hold of third place in the NCAA men's basketball tournament at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Knights (7-1) will gun for a share of top spot with the Lions (8-1) when they tackle the Perpetual Help Altas in the 2 p.m. match.

The Dolphins (6-2) tangle with the St. Benilde Blazers (1-7) in the 4 p.m. contest hoping to stay in strong contention for the top two slots in the Final Four.

At this stage, Mapua (5-4) is the only other team with a solid chance of making it to the Final Four where the two teams with the best records are rewarded with twice-to-beat incentives in the fight for the two title berths.

The Knights and the Dolphins are favored although Letran will have to show consistent form after struggling past the Blazers, 71-63, last week

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	8	1
Letran	7	1
PCU	6	2
Mapua	5	4
SSC	3	6
Perpetual	2	6
Jose Rizal	2	7
St. Benilde	1	7

GAMES TODAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 noon—Letran vs. Perpetual Help (Jrs/Srs)
4 p.m.—PCU vs. St. Benilde (Srs/Jrs)

``I'm sure Perpetual will play tough, so we have to have a good start. Another key for us is our defense. We're not consistent defending against St. Benilde, which we can't afford against Perpetual," said Letran coach Louie Alas.

Though Letran owns a 60-48 rout of Perpetual in the first round, Alas admits he is worried over his team's morale after the Lions ended the Knights' winning skein with a 57-49 victory.

Forward Aaron Aban is expected to lead the Knights while the Altas will count on Fritz Bauzon and Khiel Misa.

PCU will bank on Gabby Espinas and Jason Castro as it attempts to duplicate its 66-61 victory over St. Benilde in the first round. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Acsat's Sia elected Ucaa president

RAOUL SIA OF THE ASIAN COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY WAS RECently elected president of the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (Ucaa), taking over the reins from Teddy Talens of Olivarez College. His term officially begins on Aug. 12, when the league's fifth season comes off the wraps at the San Andres Gym. Sia is a vice president at AcsaT. "I believe in the vision of the Ucaa founders, so I will continue what they started. We will make this league bigger," said Sia, whose Acsat team is only on its second year in the league.

Breaks of game give Luat Kaohsiung title

CONQUERING JITTERS AND A FORMIDAble foe, Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat yesterday ruled the Kaohsiung leg of the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball tour after an 11-7 victory over young local bet Hsia Hui-kai at the Kaohsiung Business Exhibition Hall in Taiwan.

Luat, who turns 49 in December, jumped to an early 5-1 lead over the former two-time junior world champ and never looked back, pocketing the $10,000 (around P512,000) champion's prize while keeping a Philippine sweep of this series alive.

It was a victory that soothed the feelings of a supportive Filipino crowd after top Philippine hopes Efren "Bata" Reyes failed to survive the eliminations and Francisco "Django" Bustamante lost in the semifinals.

And it came from a veteran called upon as an 11th-hour substitute to play in this premier Asian tournament for the first time in his career.

SEIZING THE MOMENT: Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat in file photo. CEBU DAILY NEWS

Crucial mistakes

"I almost lost (despite going 5-1 up)," said Luat, who as a skinny, 12-year-old greenhorn in Metro Manila's billiards circuit used to crack cue sticks on the break.

"I also got lucky because he (Hsia) made some crucial mistakes," added Luat, who got to the title match by nipping Indonesia's Muhammad Zulkifri, 11-8, in the semifinals.

Reyes, winner of the Vietnam leg, was booted following a 6-9 loss to Japan's Masaaki Tanaka Friday night, while Bustamante was shown the door by Hsia, 4-11, in their Final Four confrontation.

Hsia, who settled for the $5,000 second placer's purse, took out Tanaka in the semifinals.

Ramil Gallego, who also lost in the qualifying here, earlier topped the Bangkok leg, and the Filipinos gun for a series sweep when the final leg is played in Jakarta next month.

Automatic entry

The series is the only ranking tour in Asia for players hoping to qualify for the World Pool Championship. The top 10 finishers after four legs will automatically enter the $160,000 tournament scheduled in Manila in November.

Filipinos won three of the four legs last year with Gandy Valle prevailing in Singapore, Reyes in Jakarta and former AZ Billiards Rookie of the Year Ronnie Alcano ruling the Manila leg.

Hsia got to within 6-8 after pouncing on a crucial scratch by Luat in the 14th rack. But the Taiwanese blew several chances to come even closer and apply more pressure by missing what looked like easy shots in the succeeding games.

"It was Luat's leg to win," said Philippine billiards 'godfather' Aristeo "Putch" Puyat. "He showed the determination to win even after committing some mistakes." *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous to your health.

Nulial proves worth in 21K, tops Naga leg

AGE-GROUP winner Bryan Paul Padin, 8, gets his trophy from Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo.

NAGA CITY—ANTONIO NULIAL JR. proved more than equal to the challenge of a longer race while Luisa Raterta reclaimed her old title yesterday in the Naga City leg of the 30th National Milo Marathon at the Plaza Quezon here.

After placing second in the 5K race here last year, Nulial emphatically captured the 21K race for the first time, clocking one hour, 15 minutes and 35 seconds.

"Hindi muna ako sumali sa 21K kasi akala ko malalakas ang kalaban (I did not try the 21K in my first race here last year because I thought my rivals were strong)," said the 22-year-old Nulial. *"Ngayong nasubukan ko na, kaya ko naman pala* (I tried it this time and it was easy after all)."

A third-year Criminology student at the University of North Eastern Philippines, Nulial advanced to the 42K national finals on Dec. 10 in Metro Manila along with second placer Moises Obias (1:16:03) and third placer Henry Janer (1:17:18).

Raterta clocked 1:38:46 to reclaim the women's title she yielded to Joanne Manangat last year.

Raterta, the twin sister of 2003 Milo Marathon queen Liza Yambao, said she was feverish during the race last year and did not have the strength to beat Manangat, who was second this time in 1:40:58.

Lourdes Anchuvas timed 2:09:41 for third in the race held in partnership with Bayview Park Hotel-Manila, Adidas, Cebu Pacific, Department of Tourism and Powerbar.

Nulial said he had been training for the event since June but had to fight a bout with the flu last Monday.

"Now I need to prepare for the 42K finals," said Nulial, who will try to beat defending national champion Cresenciano Sabal, the new owner of the Milo Marathon 42K record of 2:21:33.

Last year's leg winner Neri Barcelo finished fifth, five minutes behind Nulial, and said he lacked practice this time.

The top three finishers in the 5K fun run were Jose Cailao (17:27), Vicente Dacuba (17:34) and Regie Pesimo (17:41) in the men's division and Robinna May Evangelista (19:00), Sharon Bachicha (23:04) and Rowena Nisurtado (24:14) in the women's side.

The winners in the 3K Kiddies race were Brian Paul Padin and Rizalyn Payong in the 6-9 age category and Miguel Gonzales and Cindy Lopez in the 10-12 group.

Organizers also gave a special award to 78-year-old Alejandro Chua, who was the oldest 21K finisher in yesterday's race.

Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo assisted Milo Sports Events executive Pat Goc-ong in handing the trophies and medals to the winners.

The 30-leg elimination schedule resumes next week at the SBMA in Olongapo City.

PBA readies plan to stop 'foul' trades

Eala: Teams shall list top 5 cagers

By June Navarro

THE FUROR CREATED BY THE RECENT EIGHT-PLAYER, THREE-WAY TRADE trade involving Barangay Ginebra, Coca-Cola and Air21 may be prevented in the future through a "restricted trading list."

Commissioner Noli Eala said establishing a restricted trading list, or RTL, will not only prevent a similar controversy in the future but also maintain competitive balance among the teams.

Under the restricted list, Eala said all teams would be required to name their top five players who could only be traded with their counterparts from the other teams.

"The top five players should be equal in terms of skills, longevity, marketability and salary," said Eala, who will table the measure in the next PBA board meeting to be held in Macau on Aug. 12-14.

Eala said that it's high time the RTL was considered following the divisiveness caused by the multi-player deal that transpired last week.

He said he had already discussed the RTL with new board chair Ricky Vargas, who, incidentally, wants to amend the league's constitution and by-laws.

Eala said the irregularity in the recent transaction sprang when Air21 recovered its 2007 and 2008 first-round picks from Coca-Cola after dealing Manny Ramos and Kalani Ferreria to the Tigers.

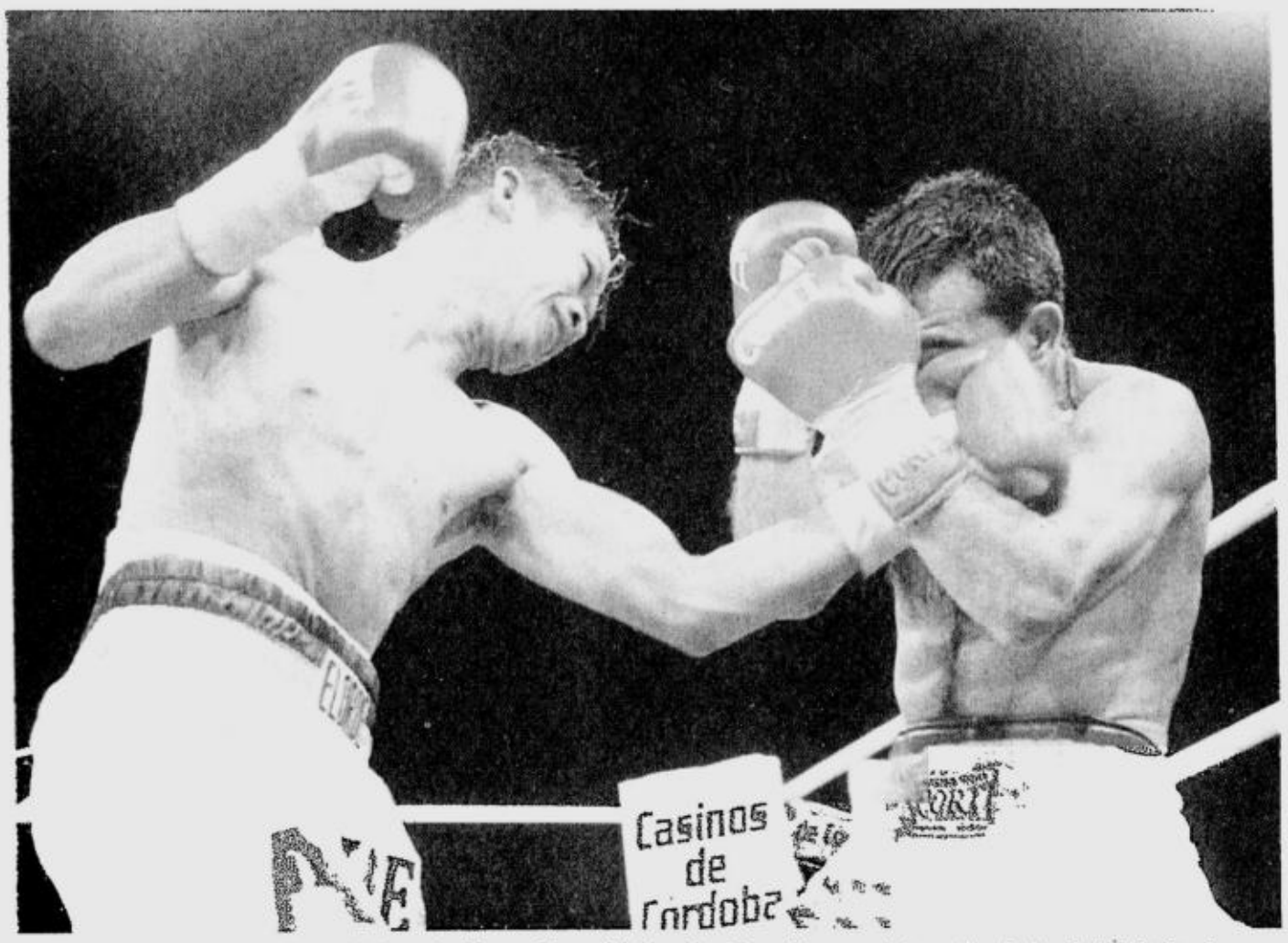
Based on the findings of the Commissioner's Office, the Express initiated the negotiations by shipping Ryan Bernardo along with their two first-round picks to the Tigers.

The Tigers exchanged Billy Mamaril, Rafi Reavis and the rights to Rudy Hatfield, whom the Express immediately sent to the Barangay Ginebra Kings, who swapped Aris Dimaunahan, Ervin Sotto, Ferreria and Ramos in return.

Eala said the lapse came when the Express traded Ferreria and Ramos to the Tigers and retrieved their two future first-round picks.

"Air21 should have kept the four players while Coca-Cola kept the two first-round picks," Eala told the Inquirer.

According to league rules, a team which transferred its player or draft rights "may not reacquire such rights prior to the end of the season in which the transfer occurred, or, if the transfer occurred between seasons, prior to the end of the next succeeding season."



FILIPINO challenger Rexon Flores (left) trades blows with world champion Omar Narvaez of Argentina during their fight Sunday. AP

Flores blows WBO flyweight title bid

OMAR ANDRES NARVAEZ OF ARGENTIna outclassed Filipino challenger Rexon Flores and easily retained his World Boxing Organization flyweight championship yesterday at the Super Domo Orfeo in Cordoba, Argentina.

Two judges handed out similar 119-109 verdicts while the third came up with an even more lopsided 120-108 score for the undefeated local boy Narvaez, who notched his 22nd win, 15 by knockout. His two other fights ended in draws.

Flores, the mandatory challenger, saw his win-loss-draw record dip to 16-3-4.

Flores, the reigning WBO Asia Pacific flyweight titlist, came into the fight riding an 11-bout winning streak against Filipino fighters. He has also successfully defended his title, which he had won against a Thai in 2004, in as many occasions.

He defended twice the regional crown he won in 2004 against a Thai to earn the chance to challenge Narvaez in Argentina's second largest city.

Flores' loss followed a string of debacles suffered by Filipinos in world title fights this year. The other losers were Diosdado Gabi (IBF flyweight), Rodel Mayol (WBC minimumweight) and Randy Suico (WBA lightweight).

Late last year, another Filipino fighter—Eriberto "Yukka" Gejon—also failed to snatch the WBA minimumweight crown from Japan's Yutaka Niida. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

Backups give fancied chess squads a lift

Standings after fifth round (match point system): 4.5—Nameless; 4.0—Balanga City, Page-Jeca, DAR; 3.5—Meycauayan, PAF, RTU, DAREA, Stolich; 3.0—Tagaytay City "A", Tagaytay City "C", Cagayan North

MALIK GUMAMA AND RYAN FRANCO BEAT separate Philippine Air Force foes in Boards 2 and 3 yesterday as the Nameless squad remained on top of 2006 Rapid Open chess team championships at the Star Mall in Mandaluyong.

DABLEO: Fine draw

Gumama and Franco posted victories over Raymond Salcedo and Rudy Abbu for a fifth-round 2.5-1.5 victory over the Air Force, whose skipper, Ronald Dableo, held Grandmaster Nelson Mariano to a draw.

Tournament favorite Balanga City got the lift from unheralded Butch Villavieja and Efren Arguelles in a similar 2.5-1.5 decision of Stolich for a share of second place.

Grandmaster Mark Paragua was also held to a draw by NM Darwin Laylo and Villavieja and Arguelles provided the difference after hammering out victories over Samson Lim and Rolenson Loyola in the middle two boards.

Mayor Melanio Banzon Jr.'s Balanga City now has 4.0 points, the same output of Page-Jeca and the Department of Agrarian Reform, 2.5-1.5 winner over Air Lift Asia Inc. and 2.5-1.5 over Tagaytay City A, respectively.

The two-day, nine-round Swiss tournament, which is being organized by the Mandaluyong City Chess Association, offers a prize pot of P130,000. The champion team pockets P50,000.

A total of 34 teams are seeing action with Meycauayan now tied for fifth spot with Stolich and three others with 3.5 points after bowing to the Rizal Technological University squad. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Stick to boxing, Pacquiao

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

BOXING HERO MANNY PACQUIAO should put on hold his plan to run for vice mayor of Manila next year. His life has become this big because of boxing. He should stick to it and make hay while the sun still shines.

Not to belittle his noble intentions of serving the people, but he can be of help in so many other ways without necessarily becoming the vice mayor of Manila.

The report about him being wooed to be the running mate of Arnold "Ali" Atienza, son of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, who is now on his last term, has left many in a dither. It also left many questions unanswered.

There is no question that he is popular, but is this enough? Many say Pacquiao has still a lot to learn when it comes to running the affairs of the country's premier city, including presiding over Manila's city council which is composed of grizzled politicians. Why is he in a hurry then? Has money and fame corrupted his thinking? Is he only being used by his politician-friends?

"I make my own decision," said the 27-year-old Pacquiao, also known as "Pacman" in a recent interview. "I was not forced to join the fray," added Pacquiao, who is facing Mexico's Erik Morales in a rubber match in Las Vegas on Nov. 18.

At this stage however, everything is pure speculation. As Ali Atienza said the other day, "It's too early to talk politics." This, despite the fact that he is being endorsed by residents of Manila to succeed his popular father because of his youth, energy and management skills (he was only 21 when he became Asian taekwondo champion in 1994). Now 33 years old, Ali is chair of the Manila Sports Council and was recently appointed by President Macapagal-Arroyo as Presidential Assistant on Youth and Sports.

* * *

NOTHING HAS CHANGED. I don't think I want to hear another report about the Philippine basketball team losing again in its campaign abroad. I may sound like a broken record, but I am repeating here what I have been saying in the past, that basketball is not for Filipinos.

For instance, in the ongoing Al-Emadi International Basketball Championship in Doha, Qatar, SMC-Pilipinas went down in defeat three times in a row, losing to host Qatar, 77-58, last Wednesday; to Latvia, 73-65, on Thursday and to African champion Angola, 82-67, Friday. Still, the RP team, made up mostly by well-funded PBA players and a few pro-bound college stars, has a slim chance of winning the title with back-to-back victories in its last two games.

In the recent William Jones Cup in Taiwan, SMC-Pilipinas failed to make the round of four after losing four games in five starts during the qualifying matches. What a pity. Isn't this RP team supposed to be the best in the land, a brand-new team that is supposed to be strong, well-trained and competitive? It seems to me nothing has changed. We are still the favorite whipping boys of our much-improved rivals despite our bold ambition to regain our past glory in the international basketball scene.

The PBA's all-out campaign to take part in the Doha Asian Games in December and qualify for the 2008 Beijing Olympics is a great idea, but, as I have said again and again, it is not a practical idea, an idea which is virtually impossible to achieve.

I have no quarrel with PBA commissioner Noli Eala and national coach Chot Reyes, but they should wake up to the harsh realities of the times. Philippine participation in the basketball event of the Doha Asiad is even hanging in the air because the Philippines continues to be suspended by Fiba, the international basketball federation.

On the country's obsession with basketball, Carlos Loyzaga, the greatest Filipino basketeer of all time, once noted, "Basketball (in the Philippines) has top priority over the other sports, but this is wrong because there are other sport disciplines where the Filipino athletes can excel." By other sports disciplines, Mr. Loyzaga probably meant boxing, football, taekwondo, archery, chess, golf, bowling and billiards where height is not an advantage.

Basketball's tremendous popularity started in the 1950s and 1960s when the Philippines consistently won the Asian Games and ABC championships. In 1954, the national team, led by Hall of Famers Loyzaga and Lauro Mumar, won third place in the World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Loyzaga was also named to the WBC Mythical Five that year.

The decline in Philippine basketball, specifically in the Asian Games, started during the 1966 Bangkok Asiad, lasting up to the present. The Filipinos marked their last appearance in Olympic basketball in Munich in 1972.

TENNIS CHAMP: Jessica Marie Lim Agra (third from left), fresh off her doubles victory in an ITF championship in Egypt, makes a courtesy call to Sports Resources, Inc. (SRI) president Rod Claudio (right) to thank Prince Tennis Rackets for its support to RP tennis players. The 14-year-old Agra also reached the singles quarterfinals of her class in the Egypt tournament after earlier making the semifinals in both singles and doubles of an ITF event in Sri Lanka, the doubles finals in Abu Dhabi and the doubles final four in Singapore. Jessica is also the reigning singles champion in the Toby's Age Group tourney. Also in photo are Jessica's father Alberto Agra (left) and SRI marketing manager Liza Enciso.

Nat'l 9-ball tourney, Adidas Streetball top Forum topics

THE MONEY-RICH NATIONAL 9-BALL CHAMPIonship heads the topic of discussions in Tuesday's PSA Forum at the main function room of the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila. Billiards and Snooker Congress of the Philippines chair Yen Makabenta and other billiards officials will talk about the Aug. 15-20 meet featuring the country's finest cue artists. Joining them in the public sports program aired over Sports Radio 918 and sponsored by Pagcor, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Masco chair Ali Atienza are officials behind the Adidas Streetball Challenge national finals headed by Adidas sports marketing manager Goody Custodio and tournament director Jay Salvador.

Tiger takes control in Buick golf

GRAND BLANC, MICHIGAN—TIGER WOODS GOT UP EARLY Saturday to finish his second round, and promptly hit one of his worst shots in years.

By the end of the third round, he was in a familiar position after stringing together fantastic shots from tee to green.

Woods closed in on his second straight victory, birdieing two of the last three holes for his third straight 6-under 66 and a two-stroke lead in the Buick Open.

He surged to the top of the leaderboard with a birdie at No. 16 and caught a break on the last hole, helping him pull away from a pack of players having their way with Warwick Hills.

Woods' tee shot on 18 went way left and ricocheted off a spectator and into the fairway. Woods thanked the fan by giving him a signed glove, and ended up making a 7-footer for birdie.

"That guy is going to have a bad bruise on his hand," Woods said. "He really took one for the team."

Robert Allenby, Lucas Glover and Scott Verplank were tied for second after 66s. Two-time defending champion Vijay Singh (68) was three strokes behind in a group of five that included Vaughn Taylor, who matched the third-round tournament record with a 63.

"It's the type of golf course that you can shoot anything," Allenby said. "Last year, I shot 7 under the last eight holes to finish fourth. It shows you that you're never really out of it."

Woods is 20-for-20 when leading tournaments by more than one shot and is 35-of-38 when leading or tied entering a final round.

If the 30-year-old Woods wins his second Buick Open on Sunday, it will be his 50th PGA Tour victory—making him the youngest to reach the milestone.

He is playing in his first tournament since his emotional win at the British Open and before he goes for his 12th major at the PGA Championship in two weeks.

Woods resumed the rain-delayed second round in the morning at the par-5 16th hole and promptly hooked his tee shot out of bounds.

"It was probably the worst shot I've hit in years, just a terrible snap hook," he said.

He bogeyed the hole and finished with a 66. His 12-under 132 total left him one shot behind Brett Quigley, who slipped back in the pack with a 71 in the third round to finish at 14 under.

Woods, who had a 4½-hour break before the third round, bogeyed No. 2 after missing the green on his approach. After Quigley got to 14 under on the fourth hole, Woods stayed within a shot with a clutch, 18-footer for his first of three birdies on the front nine.

He had four birdies on the back, knowing just getting under par doesn't cut it at the Buick Open. Pars are like bogeys on a lot of holes at Warwick Hills, which is relatively short and has greens that the players rave about. *AP*

TIGER Woods has his sights trained on victory No. 50 REUTERS

Hansen breaks 'baby' record

IRVINE, CALIFORNIA—BRENDAN Hansen closed the US Swimming Championships with his second world record of the week Saturday, lowering his own mark in the 200m breaststroke.

Hansen lifted the title in 2:08.74, bettering his previous world record of 2:09.04 set in Long Beach, California, on July 11, 2004.

"The 200 is my baby," said Hansen, who broke his 100m breaststroke world record to 59.13 seconds on Tuesday.

"It has been my event since I was a little kid. It's my favorite event. I knew that if I was really fast in the 100, that coming out here in the 200 I was going to be pretty quick."

Hansen, who completed a 100m-200m breaststroke double at the world championships last year, was ahead of world record pace the entire race, and finished well ahead of Eric Shanteau (2:11.38) and Scott Usher (2:11.96).

After a strong swim in the heats, Hansen said, he just tried to stay calm and conserve energy for the final.

"The only way I was really going to stay calm was to sleep. I took a nap, and I woke up and was hanging out with my roommate (Ian) Crocker, just talking about how easy the morning was, and I knew the 200 was going to be there if I swam it right," he said.

Olympian Amanda Weir won the women's 100m freestyle with an American record of 53.58 seconds. She finished ahead of Natalie Coughlin (54.25) and Lacey Nymeyer. *AFP*

HANSEN AFP

Steinhauer grabs British Open lead

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, ENGLAND—Two-time champion Sherri Steinhauer made a 50-foot eagle putt and shot a 6-under 66 Saturday for a three-stroke lead at the Women's British Open.

At 7-under-207, she led Lorena Ochoa, 2000 British Open champion Sophie Gustafson, 2004 winner Karen Stupples and Juli Inkster.

After halfway leader Inkster squandered a three-stroke lead at Royal Lytham, Steinhauer made an eagle and four birdies in a throwback to the performances that earned her British Open titles in 1998 and '99 before the tournament became a major.

Inkster, who bogeyed the last hole after her second shot landed in a greensider bunker, made a 2-over 74.

Her overnight three-shot lead had been cut to two when she started her round, but the 46-year-old American—trying to become the oldest LPGA player to win a major—birdied the first to go back to three ahead of the field. But double bogeys at the seventh and 10th holes wiped out her lead.

Steinhauer, who won the first of her British Open titles at Lytham, went into something of a decline after her second Open triumph at Woburn, winning just one tournament in 6 1/2 years on the LPGA Tour.

Starting the day five strokes behind Inkster, she made her charge from the 11th by picking up five shots in six holes. She almost holed a 20-foot birdie putt at 17 which would have put her four ahead.

Ochoa carded the best round of the tournament, a 65.

The Mexican started and finished with birdies and had five more in between without a single bogey to move to a three-round total of 212.

Apart from a virtual tap-in at the eighth, she holed birdie putts in the 10-17 foot (3-5 meter) range. When she came off the 18th, she was tied for the lead before Steinhauer made her charge. *AP*

Penalties hinder Schumacher, Alonso

BUDAPEST, HUNGARY—MICHAEL SCHUmacher and Fernando Alonso will continue their duel from the middle of the starting grid at the Hungarian Grand Prix after both were hit with time penalties.

Kimi Raikkonen of McLaren-Mercedes, last year's winner, took the pole position Saturday in 1 minute, 19.599 seconds on the course. However, the focus was on Schumacher and Alonso after both incurred two-second penalties per qualifying session.

It was the 10th career pole position for Finland's Raikkonen and his second straight.

Schumacher was 12th and Alonso 15th in the qualifications, but Schumacher will move up to 11th when Jenson Button moves down from fourth to 14th because of an engine change, which indirectly caused Schumacher's penalty.

When Button's car caught fire, the session was stopped and Schumacher judged to pass two cars—including Alonso—despite red flags being waved. Afterward, Schumacher was penalized two seconds by the stewards.

"Of course I am angry but I blame myself too," Schumacher said, adding video tapes would show what happened.

"It is a bit difficult to explain what happened out there," Schumacher said later. "It's easier if everybody looks at the pictures. There you see more and the pictures are self-explanatory."

Alonso still leads Schumacher in the season's standings 100-89, and it could get closer after Sunday's race on the tight, twisting Hungaroring circuit where passing is difficult.

"The race in Hungary is as hard as in Monaco, You can usually not overtake here either," Schumacher said.

Schumacher started from last at Monaco after another qualifying penalty and finished fifth. He had been judged to intentionally stop his car at the last curve to slow the drivers.

In Friday's practice at Hungaroring, stewards ruled that Alonso made "unnecessary, unacceptable and dangerous" actions in an incident with Red Bull's Robert Doornbos. Alonso made a hand gesture to him, veered off the racing line toward him and then slowed around a curve making Doornbos take action to avoid a crash. *AP*

CLIJSTERS AP

Clijsters battles Sharapova

SAN DIEGO—TOP SEED KIM CLIJSTERS held off a late fightback to beat Czech teen Nicole Vaidisova, 6-2 7-6, in the semifinals of the Acura Classic in San Diego on Saturday, setting up a final clash with Maria Sharapova.

No. 2 Sharapova was pushed hard by Patty Schnyder before winning, 7-5 6-4, to reach her first Acura final.

Clijsters, who picked up her 24th consecutive win in North American summer hard court events, dominated early with precise groundstrokes and vicious returns to take the opening set.

"I'm hitting the ball deep and well," said Clijsters, who has won every major North American hard court title except San Diego.

"I'm moving well, my tactics are good and my game is falling into place. I'm not serving well, but my second shots have been very good."

Clijsters, who also beat the Czech 17-year-old in the semifinals of Stanford last week, broke Vaidisova twice to open up a 3-0 lead in the second set.

But Vaidisova came storming back to break Clijsters thrice and force a tie-breaker.

The Czech failed to hold her nerve, however, and Clijsters romped to a 7-0 win.

"I didn't play smart and lost it a little bit in the end," Vaidisova said.

Sharapova served superbly to reach her first WTA Tour final since March in a match that lasted one hour, 39 minutes.

Clijsters has a 4-0 edge over Sharapova, including the semifinals of the 2005 US Open.

"(Clijsters) not only gets a lot of balls back, they have a lot of juice on them," Sharapova said. "I need to take certain things away from her, but still play my game and not try to play anything extra special." Reuters

SHARAPOVA AP

Team USA ready to rock world hoops

GUANGZHOU, CHINA—THE UNITED STATES made its first appearance in basketball-mad China Sunday in preparation for the World Championships in Japan, as they work toward regaining global superiority.

Led by standouts Dwyane Wade, Lebron James and Carmelo Anthony, the team is aiming to again be No. 1 after finishing a disappointing sixth in the 2002 World Basketball Championships and taking bronze at the 2004 Olympics.

They will play warm-up matches here against China and Brazil.

"There are no more waltzes," NBA Commissioner David Stern told AFP when asked if Team USA would have an easy time at the World Championships.

On Monday, the Americans take on China, but NBA All Star Yao Ming remains unsure if he will be healthy enough to make his first appearance with the national side since breaking a foot in April.

"Right now the injury is about 80 percent recovered, but there is still a little instability," Yao told the Chinese press in Beijing.

"The doctors are telling me to look at this from the long-term perspective and avoid high-level competition, so although I'll be in Guangzhou, I might not play."

Match promoters are saying otherwise.

Yao's picture is plastered on billboards and buses throughout this southern city in adverts for the game where tickets will cost fans up to $470, or about the annual income of a Chinese farmer.

On Tuesday, Team USA will play Brazil here before two warm-up games in South Korea ahead of the championships to be played in Japan from Aug. 19-Sept. 3.

"My main concern is with my own team, how we play each time at practice and in the games," head coach Mike Krzyzewski said. "My part is to get star players from a number of teams to play together as one team." *AFP*

This early, Pereiro feels like Tour de France king

VIGO, SPAIN—OSCAR PEREIRO NO longer thinks of himself as runner-up in the Tour de France.

"Now I consider myself the winner," he told a press conference in his hometown on Saturday.

The Tour itself renounced Floyd Landis as its champion Saturday after the second of two urine samples tested positive for higher-than-allowable levels of testosterone. Pierre Bordry, who leads the French anti-doping council, said the samples contained synthetic testosterone, indicating that it came from an outside source.

Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme said Landis was no longer considered champion.

Runner-up Pereiro would be the likely new winner, but Prudhomme said the decision to strip Landis of the title rests with the International Cycling Union.

Pereiro said he felt badly for Landis, whom he thought must be living the worst days of his life.

"I consider him my friend, it surprised me and hurt me to hear what had happened to him," he said.

But Pereiro said he regretted not having been able to celebrate a win properly, in Paris, wearing the winner's yellow jersey, having his photograph taken on the podium.

"I would have liked to have lived that day, it would have been the best day of my life, as a sportsman," Pereiro said.

He said riders at the Tour had undergone 400 doping tests. Landis has said he was tested nine times, and Pereiro said Saturday he went through four doping checks.

"The bad thing is that the winner should have failed," Pereiro said. "I trust Floyd, but the analysis shows he may have broken a rule. He failed an anti-doping test. If you fail the norms set, then you have to be withdrawn."

Supportive

Meanwhile, in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, Landis' parents planted a "God Bless, Went Camping" sign in their front yard Saturday, leaving it to friends and neighbors to defend their son against the doping scandal that threatens his Tour de France title.

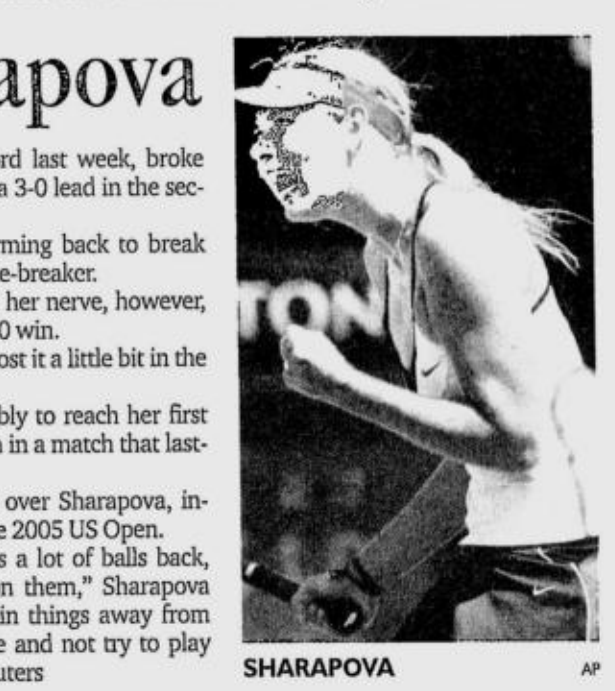
Tammy Martin, one of the Landis' neighbors and closest friends, said Landis has proven his "outstanding skill" as a cyclist and that he ultimately will be exonerated.

"All he has accomplished, he has attained through his hard work and discipline," she said at her home in Farmersville, a rural crossroads just outside the borough of Ephrata in eastern Pennsylvania.

Paul and Arlene Landis, devout Mennonites, always have defended their son against the doping accusations and insisted he's clean.

At Green Mountain Cyclery, the Ephrata bike shop where Landis bought his first mountain bike, owner Mike Farrington said Saturday he doesn't believe Landis did anything wrong.

"My opinion and personal beliefs in Floyd have not changed in the last 15 years, and they are not about to start changing now." *AP*



OSCAR Pereiro feels like he's on top of the world right now. AP

TOLEDO JR CUP

Piccio stumbles in playoff

PICCIO

MIA PICCIO MISSED WINNING HER SECond Junior Amateur Golf Scholars (JAGS) Tour title in three weeks when she lost in a playoff to Rebecca Song of California in the 2006 Toledo Junior Cup at the Cresta Verde Golf Club in Corona, California, over the weekend.

The 14-year-old Piccio, who ruled the recent 2006 JAGS's Jack & Madaline Hooper Memorial Major Tournament at the California Country Club in Whittier, fought back from five strokes down in the first round to surge to a two-shot lead with three holes left only to falter on No. 16 when she drove out of bounds.

Song birdied that hole to go 1-up again only to bogey the next, enabling the bespectacled Filipina shotmaker to draw level and force the sudden death in the 36-hole tournament for players aged 12 to 18.

But Piccio, who is in the national pool of talents under the ICTSI golf program, flubbed her birdie putt from 16 feet in the playoff. Song then hammered the last nail on the win, sinking an eight-foot birdie putt to close out.

"I misread the line of my putt. But next time, I'm gonna get back at her," said Piccio, who closed out with a one-over par 73 to tie Song, who fumbled with a 78, at 150.

Linnel de Villa, the other Filipino in the fold, finished sixth with a 163 after an 82.

It was indeed a sorry loss for Piccio, who birdied two of the first two holes in the second round to erase Song's five-shot lead and then pounced on her rival's back-to-back three-putt bogeys to gain a two-stroke lead after 12 holes.

Meanwhile, Miko Alejandro settled for ninth place in the Sacramento City Junior Championships at the Haggin Oaks Golf Club last week.

Alejandro had rounds of 73-75 for 148, six shots off the winner. He will next play in Stockton City and the Amador County Championships. *Cedelf P. Tupas, PDI Visayas Bureau*

San Beda, RTU draw first blood

SAN BEDA COLLEGE ALABANG, LAST year's seniors B champion, leaned on Sarah Abes and Lovette Macalinga to turn back Philippine Women's University, 73-24, yesterday in the WNCAA 37th season basketball tournament at the College of St. Benilde gym.

Abes and Macalinga each scored game-highs of 16 points to lead the Red Lions to their first win in the country's first and only tri-level league for women.

SBCA is now in Group A, along with 36th season seniors A winner AMA Computer University.

PWU absorbed its second defeat in as many starts, following a 67-15 loss dealt by St. Scholastica's College on opening day last Saturday at the Cuneta Astrodome.

Rizal Technological University, 36th season overall seniors champion, likewise entered the win bracket with a 57-40 win over Emilio Aguinaldo College Manila.

Other seniors games yesterday saw St. Benilde downing Centro Escolar University, 52-42, and La Consolacion College Manila stopping University of Asia and the Pacific, 37-25.

The WNCAA 37th season is being supported by Solar Sports, Adidas, Cherifer vitamins and official balls Mikasa and Molten.

Miriam College, still playing World Citi Colleges as of press time, also won on Saturday against newcomer St. Francis of Assisi, 58-42, while Angelicum College won its juniors encounter versus host St. Stephen's High School, 53-36.

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Hawks regain winning touch, rip Holy Angel; Hawklets up

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE TEAM THAT OWNS THE LONGEST winning streak in the league finally broke its longest losing run in the young National Athletics Association of Schools Colleges and Universities (Naascu) season.

University of Manila finally found the missing pieces of the puzzle and nailed its first victory after three losses by beating Holy Angel University, 74-53, yesterday at the UM Gym.

The Hawks, who hold the record for consecutive victories with 86, relied on old-timers Pol Santiago, Onofre Napiza and Alein Maliksi who responded with double-digit performances.

After losing last year's MVP Ryan Regalado and slotman Gener Bernados, the five-time champion Hawks played listlessly and bowed to newcomer San Sebastian-Cavite, last year's runner-up STI and AMA Computer College.

"The competition is getting tough and it's good for the league," said veteran UM coach Ato Tolentino.

Santiago stepped up by topscoring with 19 points, while Napiza and Maliksi had 15 and 12 points, respectively, for the Hawks.

In the first game, the Hawklets routed the Baby Flyers, 85-44, to remain unbeaten after three games. HAU took its fourth loss in as many games.

The scores:

First Game (Jrs)

UM 85—Zaplan 18, Bilono 10, Rano 7, Hernandez 7, Sadsad 7, Rabalo 7, Bayo 7, Lacap 6, Calata 4, Mohammad 4, Loreto 3, Soliman 2, Malinao 2, Paguio 2, Mulawin 0, Fernol 0.

HAU 44—Sadias 10, Gopez 9, Balingit 6, Ocampo 5, Pine 4, Yumul 2, Mamangun 2, Mansala 2, Salunga 2, Pangilinan 2, Flores 0, Infante 0.

Quarters: 23-8, 46-16, 72-28, 85-44.

Second Game (Srs)

UM 74—Santiago 19, Napiza 15, Maliksi 12, Assuncion 11, Gobis 5, Bonus 4, Hupana 4, Delostrinos 3, Operana 2, Bucalen 0, Ocampo 0, Estaclo 0.

HAU 53—Cuizon 14, Manarang 11, Francisco 10, Angosto 6, Camu 6, Morales 2, Arevalo 2, Garcia 2, Canlas 0 , Tungul 0, Lansang 0, Abuy 0.

Quarters: 13-12, 33-26, 51-41, 74-53.

Mauricio-Mendoza tops Valley Mizuno Scramble

ADRIAN MAURICIO AND MATTHEW Mendoza combined for a nine-under-par 65 to top Division I by a stroke in the recent kick-off leg of the Mizuno Scramble Classic at the south course of the Valley Golf and Country Club at the foothills of Antipolo.

Mauricio and Mendoza came out of a 30-minute rain delay to submit the day's lowest score and slip past the tandem of Marco Olives-Kenneth Lachica in the premier division confined to teams with average handicaps of 4 to 9.9.

Luis Laureta-Joel San Vicente topped Division II (10-16.9) while Toti Salvador teamed up with daughter Arieanne to rule Division III (17-36) in the 18-hole tourney also supported by Citibank, Pagcor, BMW Philippines, Philippine Airlines, Pepsi, Gatorade, BMG Solar, Power Bar, Oakley, Citgo and C-Lium Fibre.

The three pairs became the first qualifiers for the the grand finals next year at the Ayala Greenfield Estates course where the winners will win an all-expense paid trip to Japan with entry tickets to the LPGA Mizuno Classic as bonus.

Their prizes, trophies and gift certificates, were awarded by Masters Sports chief Lovell Gopez and marketing manager Paolo Cagalingan. Masters is the distributor of Mizuno products in the Philippines.

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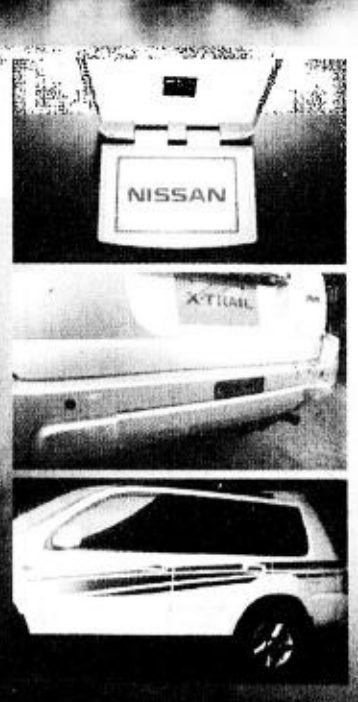

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Fitch says RP banking system remains weak

Cites poor accounting, cartel-like behavior

By Doris C. Dumlao

LONDON-BASED CREDIT WATCHDOG FITCH RATINGS HAS EXpressed concern over the quality of Philippine banks' corporate governance, citing their high level of related-party lending, "weak" accounting and disclosure practices as well as tendency to act as a cartel.

In a special report dated Aug. 3, Fitch said better corporate governance among local banks could result in improved financial performance and bode well for risk management, and in turn improve their credit ratings.

"However, there is little sign of this happening in the foreseeable future," the report said.

Philippine banks are at the low end of Fitch's rating scale, with the individual ratings of the larger banks generally at "D/E" and others at "D."

Fitch said the "D" banks' ratings were being held down by exposure to interest rate risk in a domestic environment that could be susceptible to rate increases. It noted that the "very weak" balance sheets, underlying profitability and corporate governance would need to improve before a rating upgrade could become achievable.

The rating agency also noted that the use of "truly" independent directors in the country was limited.

Since the Philippines was initially not affected that much by the Asian currency turmoil of 1997, Fitch noted that there was less pressure for much-needed reforms in the banking system and thus little reform indeed occurred.

"Competition is constrained, with limita-

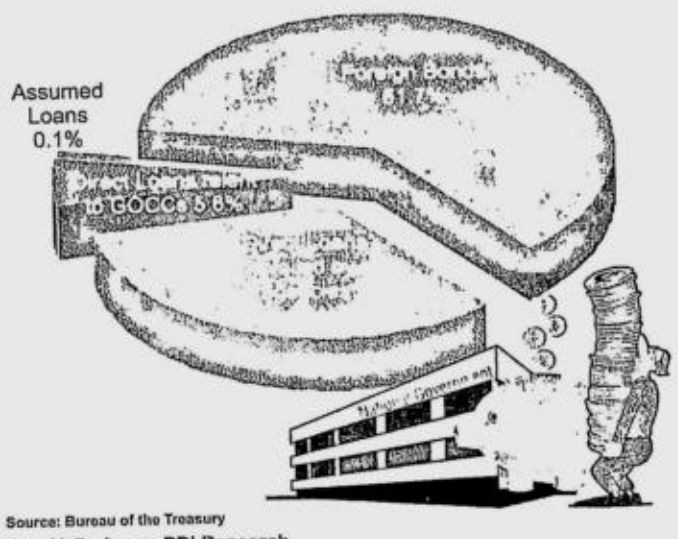
FITCH/ B4

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Foreign debt stands at P1.181 trillion
(April 2006, in billion pesos)

Forty-five percent of the national government's P3.996-trillion total outstanding debt is owed to foreign creditors. The government's foreign debt is composed mostly of foreign bonds, which make up more than half of the foreign debt at P1.105 trillion.



Source: Bureau of the Treasury
Kate V. Pedroso PDI Research

Gov't exceeds VAT collection goal

By Michelle V. Remo

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE VAT Reform law generated P38.23 billion in additional revenue for the government in the first half of the year, exceeding the P31.04-billion target for the period by 23 percent.

Fiscal authorities said the government's first-half performance kept it well on track to meet the full-year target of collecting P75 billion in additional revenue from the VAT.

The new VAT law (RA 9337) basically lifted the exemption of some previously exempted products like oil and electricity and raised the tax rate to 12 percent from 10 percent. The law likewise has revenue-enhancement provisions unrelated to VAT, such as the increase in the corporate income tax rate to 35 percent from 32 percent.

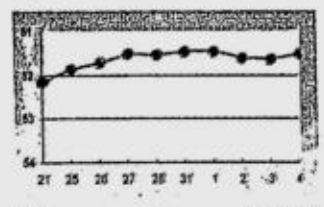
Documents from the Department of Finance showed that of the additional revenue collected in the first six months, the bigger share of P25.76 billion was delivered by the Bureau of Customs (BOC). The BOC's VAT collection was 3-percent higher than its P25-billion goal for the period.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) collected P12.47 billion in ad-

GOV'T/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

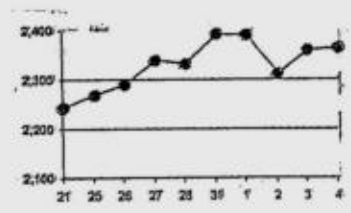


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P51.52 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 4, 2006

¥115.14 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 4, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Stocks to track earnings reports

INVESTORS ARE LIKELY TO TAKE THEIR cue from second-quarter profit results this week after a mixed bag of corporate earnings provided some distraction to the geo-political jitters last week.

"Second-quarter results have been mixed. Globe Telecom is doing very well, while some banks fell short of expectations, we'll wait and see as more numbers come out and give local equity investors something to chew on

STOCKS/ B4

IN THIS ISSUE

Kris' Oprah streak /B4

Meralco, Napocor to sign deal /B8

Beating the odds? /B10

With a lot of help from BPI Family Savings Bank, Riza Moises realized that success could just be a bus ride away.

Ms. Riza Moises was working as a manager of a bus company when she found out that there was a government program that encouraged fresh investments into the bus industry. Together with a partner, she decided to participate in that program. With a crew of just six people and three shuttle buses, she formed Genesis Transport Services in San Fernando, Pampanga.

"I'm the company's hands-on owner and manager. I'm on top of things, from operational to financial matters", said Ms. Moises. Through her leadership, Genesis Transport was able to face and survive the biggest challenges that came its way, from the Pinatubo eruption crisis in Central Luzon to the current problem of high and volatile oil prices. Today, it has more than 100 buses and almost 800 personnel, mostly drivers and conductors.

Ms. Moises shared that Genesis Transport's growth wouldn't have been possible without the help of BPI Family Savings Bank. *"The loans that we got from BPI Family allowed us to acquire additional buses. Thanks to them, I did not have to go through such a grueling process of sourcing out funds"*, added Ms. Moises.

The long-term plan of Ms. Moises is to attain full financial and operational stability for Genesis Transport, as well as to give the best compensation and benefits to her staff. *"I guess, running the business and doing what ought to be done to make it a viable company are more than enough to keep me engaged and totally busy. And it's great to know that I can always rely on* BPI Family Savings Bank *for help"*.

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3 airlines seek fuel surcharge hike

By Riza T. Olchondra

PHILIPPINE AIRLINES INC. (PAL), CEBU Pacific Air and China Airlines Ltd. have sought government permission to increase fuel surcharges that are included in their ticket prices.

In separate filings with the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB), the airlines said that while any surcharge increase would be an added burden on passengers, they stressed that the adverse effect of higher oil prices on their operating costs has left them with no alternative but to seek a higher fuel surcharge.

In its letter, PAL asked that it be allowed to double its fuel surcharge for the Philippines-to-Guam route from $11 to $22.

China Airlines sought a $20 adjustment for two routes—Taipei-United States and Taipei-Canada. If its request is approved, the fuel surcharge of $34 for the two routes will increase to $54.

Only Cebu Pacific focused on fuel surcharges for domestic routes, its primary source of business. The budget carrier asked for adjustments in six route segments. It wanted an additional fuel surcharge of P140 for its Luzon-Mindanao flights (currently P850), P100 for Luzon-Visayas (currently P620), P100 for routes within Luzon (currently P450), P60 within Visayas (currently P400), P60 within Mindanao (currently P550), and P60 for Visayas-Mindanao (currently P550).

"Unlike other airlines that are able to increase the regional surcharges to the level that these can partially subsidize the domestic sector, Cebu Pacific's regional operations only comprise a small part of its operations," Cebu Pacific said in its letter to the CAB.

"The wide array of low fares that are offered by the airline especially in the domestic sector, while stimulating more people to travel, does not leave the airline with a large buffer to accommodate increasingly high fuel prices," the carrier added.

The CAB has set separate hearings to give the three airlines a forum to justify their requests.

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☐ 3. Daeheung Mechatronics Co..	Diesel Engine Generator:20-2 000Kw,Branded Alternators :DG Ser.,B2 forms, 3phase 4 wires
☐ 4. Eastpower Co. Ltd.	Diesel Engine Generators, Heavy Duty Indt'l
☐ 5. First Power & Panel (Cheil)	Switchgears-Metal Clad, Control Gears, Panel Boards, First Prefabricated Switchboards
☐ 6. Hanyang Electric Co. Ltd.	Switchgears :High-Low Voltage Panel, Relays Inverters : for Solar Beam -Photovoltaic Type
☐ 7. O-Sung Electric Machinery Co.	Automatic TransferSwitch, AirCircuit Breaker
☐ 8. Powermax Co. Ltd.	Transformers : Power, Distribution, Pole, Etc. Generators :Emergency, AC, Motor, C/S Panel
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September 12 - 14, 2006
Mandarin Oriental Hotel

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- Formulate a more balanced work life program.

Because you should never sacrifice one for the other.

This program was designed for **managers, supervisors, line leaders, technical people**, and **members of top management** who want to strike a balance between work and personal life.

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September 12 - 14, 2006
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- Synchronize the entire team, department, or organization with your customers' priorities
- Set a strategy that will bring the business on the road to superb service
- Identify and assess organizational gaps in your policies, procedures and workflow that hamper excellent service
- Align systems and people to implement the service strategy
- Build a culture of energy and passion that will constantly send the right message to customers
- Cascade a service culture throughout the team, department or organization using Five Crucial Leadership Fundamentals

Excellent Customer Service depends on everyone in your organization.

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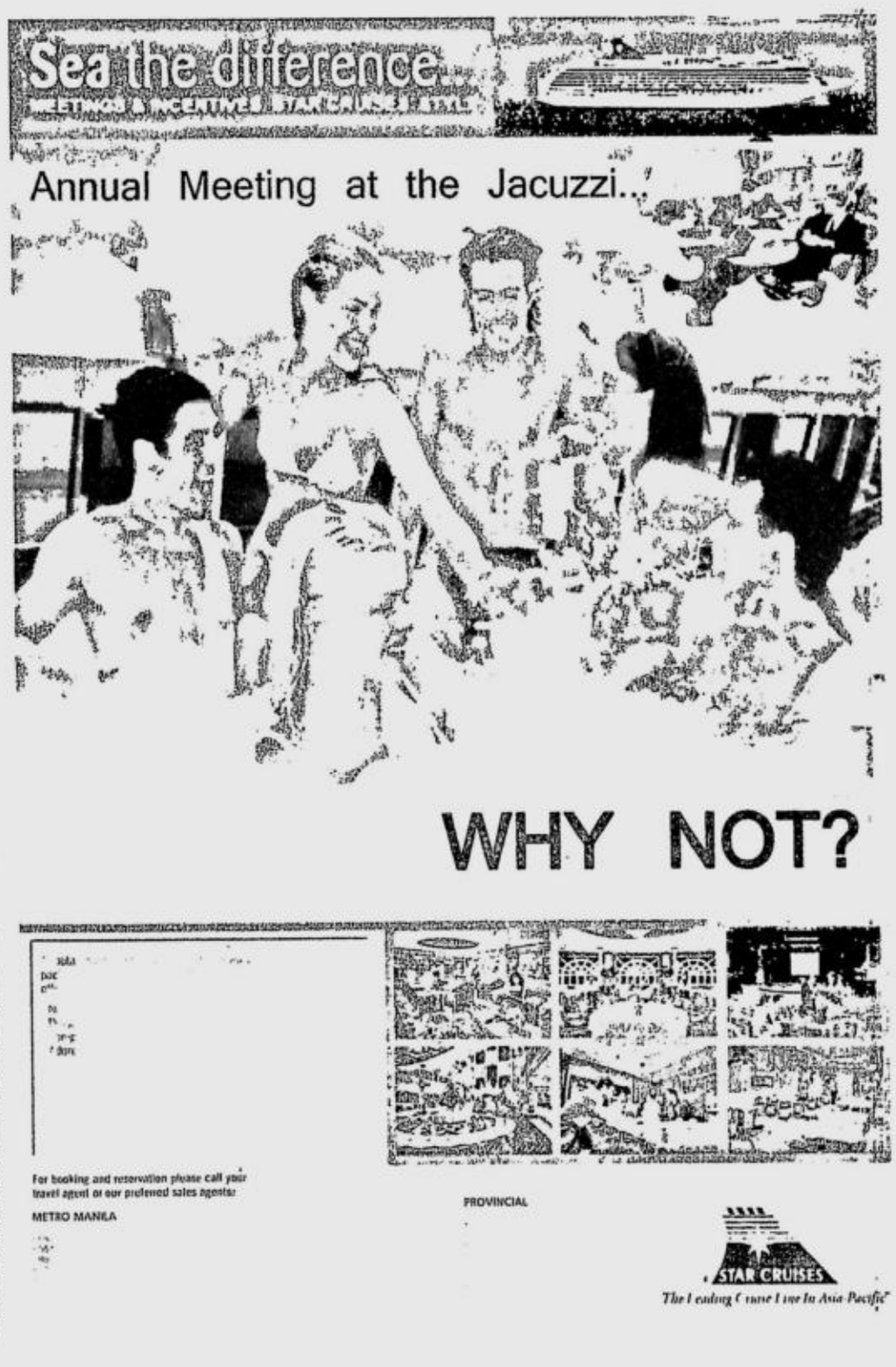
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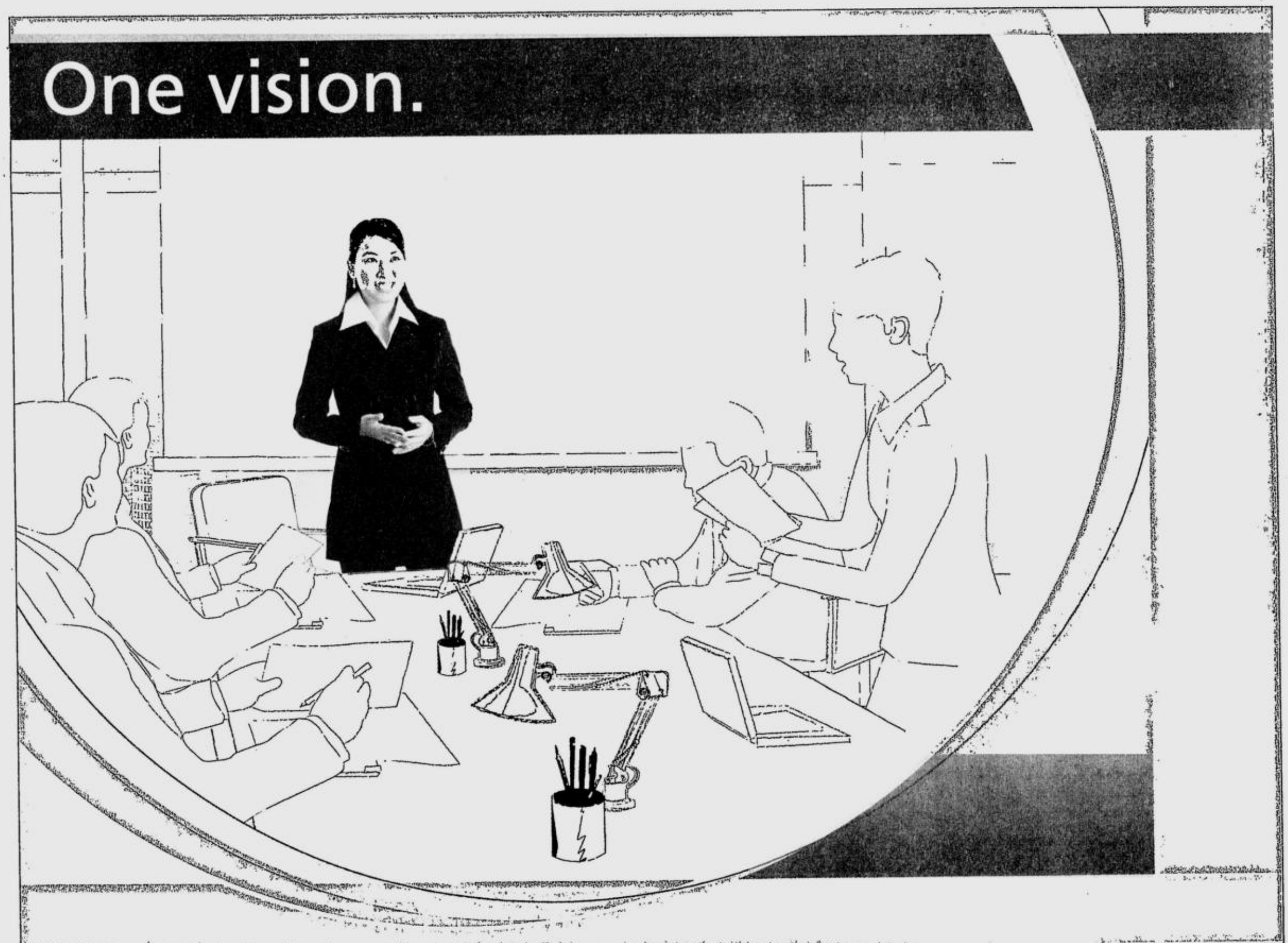
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Kris' Oprah streak

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

RATHER THAN THE INK-STAINED WRETCHes writing about and profiting from her loves and mishaps, Kris Aquino has decided, ala Oprah Winfrey, to publish her own magazine to chronicle her colorful life.

And, instead of just being a one-issue wonder as had originally been planned, the actress-talk show host's K magazine is well underway with a third issue by next week.

One of the glossies in the ABS-CBN Publishing stable, K's first issue sold out more than 50,000 copies, according to the group's general manager/editorial director, Thelma Sioson-San Juan.

The first issue, as well as the succeeding issues, refrained from the usual show biz scandal-stories but instead focused on tips, howtos, and advice to young women, with Kris not only adorning the cover but, like Oprah, doling out the advice as well.

Surprisingly, K's second issue has outsold in Metro Manila, by more than 1.5 to 1, the local edition of the Cosmopolitan, the US glossy the new kid is positioned against, according to an ABS-CBN Publishing market report.

But then again, K costs only P95/issue, as against Cosmo's P120. Besides, the second issue hit the newsstand a month earlier than the current Cosmo issue, which has Camille Prats on cover versus "Kris' Secret Obsessions" splashed on the other.

And, of course, K has the broadcasting muscle of the ABS-CBN Group, not to mention the actress' popular game show, "Deal or No Deal," to keep the marketing buzz.

Mother-daughter act

SOCIALITE Rosemarie Arenas brought 61 doctors and medical personnel from St. Luke's Medical Center to Calasiao City the other weekend for an outreach program designed to help boost the congressional candidacy of her Harvard-educated daughter, Rachel.

According to the grapevine, the mother even managed to secure drugs and medical supplies for the mission from United Laboratories.

The third congressional district of Pangasinan is being vacated next year with the current incumbent having finished his third term, triggering a free-for-all fight even among the pro-GMA factions.

The Arenases own a 15-hectare mango plantation in Malasiqui town, which Rachel now uses as homebase for her congressional dream.

PNB loses $4.4-M claim

LAWYER Vicente Chuidian moved a step closer to getting his hands on a $4.4-million letter of credit issued to his company during the late Marcos years after the Supreme Court last week threw out a fresh appeal from Philippine National Bank.

PNB had been opposing a 2001 order of the Supreme Court to transfer the $4.4-million instrument to an interest-bearing account in Land Bank, as Chuidian had petitioned, until the courts determine whether Chuidian or the government owns the contested amount.

Money-go-round

- PROCTER & GAMBLE transferred its more than P2-billion media and advertising budget from Starcom MediaVest of the Publicis Group to MediaCom of the Grey Global Group.
- MANUEL Fong Jr., whose family owns 20 percent of SM Investments, has retired as managing director of the SM Supermarket chain.
- BANKARD has been ordered by the Supreme Court to pay P500,000 in damages to an Ermita doctor, Antonio Novak Feliciano, whose credit card was not only twice turned down but even seized during a 1995 trip to Toronto. Bankard claimed that it was only trying to protect Feliciano, a card holder of good standing for the past 10 years prior to the incident, after his Mastercard had apparently been cloned in Indonesia.

Heard through the grapevine

RFM has been fined P1 million by the Securities and Exchange Commission for the nonsubmission of 2005 annual and other quarterly reports. These oversights happened despite the Concepcion company having for independent director, whose duties include compliance with reportorial requirements, no less than a former SEC chief, Lilia Bautista.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Fitch says RP banking system remains weak

From page B1

tions on foreign bank involvement and expansion resulting in cartel-like behavior by the local banks—so while the revenues are good, efficiency is poor, as is technological investment and product development," Fitch said.

While it was favorable that the government had tightened regulations and requirements in line with international accounting standards, Fitch said it remained to be seen as to what extent this could be enforced.

"Forbearance by a regulator powerless to enforce its rules has been a feature of the system for many years," Fitch said.

Fitch was also skeptical on the extent to which accounting integrity and disclosure among local banks would improve despite the shift to a more stringent regime based on the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

"Accounting in the Philippines has been very poor and Fitch remains concerned that the audit of banks continued to be dominated by just one local accounting firm," it said.

"Ultimately, it would seem that for there to be a true change in the (corporate governance) practices of Philippine banks, more diversified bank ownership will be required," it stressed.

Philippine banking is dominated by about a dozen big banks controlling 77 percent of system-wide assets and a few foreign banks which control 16 percent of total assets. Of the dominant local banks, two are government-owned lenders.

"The others are mostly listed but are all controlled by local families/conglomerates, all of which have substantial non-bank interests," it said.

"(Corporate governance) requires a separation of function between the board, executive management and audit, and implementation is key. The independence and authority of each function needs to exist in more than only legal form," the report said.

Gov't ...

From page B1

ditional revenue from the VAT. This was 107-percent higher than its P6.03-billion goal for January to June.

The BIR imposes a VAT on domestically produced goods and services, while the Customs charges VAT on oil imports.

Gross VAT collection stood at P53.48 billion. But this amount does not net out the revenue impact of measures mitigating the impact of the law on purchasing power and the input VAT claims of corporate taxpayers.

Of the gross VAT collection, the 2-percentage-point increase in the VAT rate contributed P12.37 billion while the lifting of exemptions yielded P31.53 billion.

Other VAT reforms provided for in the law, including the capping of input VAT credits that firms may claim, generated P5.41 billion of the gross VAT collection.

Revenue-enhancement measures under RA 9337 that are not related to VAT, such as the increase in the corporate income tax rate, had a P4.17-billion share of the gross VAT collection.

Measures intended to ease the impact of VAT on purchasing power resulted in foregone revenues worth P7.95 billion.

The mitigating measures include the reduction of excise tax rates on petroleum products, the repeal of the franchise tax on power distribution, the lifting of common carriers tax on transport, and the removal of excise tax on natural gas, among others.

Input VAT claims of corporate taxpayers slashed the gross VAT collection by P7.3 billion.

The BIR and the BOC are hard-pressed to meet the government's target of raising P75 billion in additional revenue for the government for the full year. The government's collection performance in terms of collecting the VAT, considered the centerpiece of the Arroyo administration's fiscal reform agenda, is closely watched by credit-rating agencies and foreign investors.

Stocks to track ...

From page B1

and a bit of direction," said Edgar Bancod, head of research at AT'R Kim Eng Securities.

The stock market rose 33 points or 1.4 percent to 2,362.60 last week.

AB Capital Securities said that market sentiment might turn sour if the remaining profit reports did not come out within expectations.

"It also begs the question whether the troubles abroad are powerful enough to offset strong earnings. We believe that the overall economy is strong, reducing the likelihood that the market will have a major meltdown," AB Capital Securities wrote in a weekly note.

Investors are also likely to track the results of the US Federal Open Market Committee's policy-setting meeting on Aug. 8. AB Capital Securities noted that the market was anxious over whether the Fed would continue to raise rates. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 4, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.8	5.8	10,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31	31.5	190,100
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53.5	53.5	53	53	337,900
China Banking Corp.	885	890	885	890	4,180
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	600
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	2,250,000
Equitable PCI Bank, Inc.	84	84	82	82	198,000
International Exch. Bank	40	40	40	40	1,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	38	38	37.5	38	568,500
Phil. Bank of Comm. A	55	55	55	55	500
Philippine National Bank	35	35	35	35	11,500
Phil. Savings Bank	41	42	41	42	1,100
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	17.75	17.75	27,000
Security Bank Corp.	47	49	47	48.5	353,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	44.5	44.5	44.5	44.5	1,300
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	50,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	318,000
Filipino Fund Inc	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	6,000
First Metro Invest. Corp	30.5	30.5	29	29	25,100
Manulife Financial Corp.	1580	1590	1580	1590	200
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1	1	1	430,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	213	213	213	213	5,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1950	1950	1940	1940	850
Ivantage Corp.	1.32	1.38	1.32	1.36	2,624,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42.5	42.5	42	42.5	564,700
First Phil Hldgs Corp	43.5	44.5	43.5	44	734,700
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	16	15.75	15.75	111,100
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	25.5	24.75	25	1,625,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.5	7,299,000
Petron Corp.	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.35	4,679,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	110,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3	3	3	3	4,000
CADP Group Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	20,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	22.75	23	22.75	23	22,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32.5	33	32.5	33	388,600
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.65	3.65	3.65	688,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65.5	65	65.5	109,600
San Miguel Corp. B	71.5	72	71.5	72	129,400
Universal Robina Corp.	18.75	19.25	18.75	19	1,965,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	1,000,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.28	1,530,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	2,601,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	5	5	4.95	4.95	1,157,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	17,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	50,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Active Alliance Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	90,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	53,880,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.07	0.075	0.07	0.075	5,000,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	48,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	10,000,000
Ayala Corp.	420	420	417.5	417.5	54,650
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.53	0.55	0.53	0.55	250,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5.1	5.1	35,000
Ajo Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	6,100,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	1,166,000
APC Group Inc.	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.23	1,260,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.94	0.92	0.93	1,290,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.85	180,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	1	1	1	1	50,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	23,300
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.14	1.1	1.1	5,680,000
Dmci Holdings Inc.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	758,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.7	103,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc	6	6	5.9	6	480,000
Medco Holdings	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	570,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	14,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.2	0.185	0.19	2,420,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.54	250,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.13	0.13	0.125	0.125	12,800,000
SM Investments Corp.	223	223	217	217	88,280
South China Resources Inc	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	210,000
Unigel Res. & Holdings Co	0.0725	0.075	0.0725	0.075	5,300,000
Wellex Industries Inc	0.12	0.175	0.12	0.155	56,250,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.5	13.5	13.25	13.25	10,707,300
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	40,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	5,235,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.3	4,890,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.1	2.14	2.1	2.14	310,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.28	0.26	0.28	7,470,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.48	0.49	0.46	0.46	18,080,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	22,200,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.38	1.42	1.36	1.36	7,432,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	400,000
Interport Res.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	46,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	50,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	140,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.24	0.21	0.24	1,090,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.4	0.4	560,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.52	1.6	1.52	1.54	58,342,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.245	0.25	0.245	0.25	6,380,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	250,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.15	0.225	0.15	0.205	20,410,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.25	11.25	157,600
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.44	0.48	0.44	0.45	100,880,000
SM Development Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	165,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	2,490,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.0775	0.1	0.0775	0.0925	13,000,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	16.75	17.25	16.75	17.25	118,300
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	71,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.34	8,626,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1010	1020	1005	1020	121,840
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.75	3.8	3.7	3.75	5,181,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2075	2100	2070	2095	86,540
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.185	0.195	0.18	0.18	1,610,000
Ionics Inc.	1.9	1.96	1.9	1.96	213,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.0525	0.05	0.0525	5,600,000
Music Semiconductors Corp	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.2	102,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.031	0.03	0.031	102,100,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.85	2.9	641,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	150,600
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	1,052,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.44	1.4	1.42	8,882,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.235	0.25	0.235	0.25	600,000
Philippine Racing Club	3	3	3	3	10,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.58	0.62	0.58	0.58	6,130,000
EDUCATION					
iPeople Inc	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	8,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Easycall Phils. Inc.-Com	3.05	3.5	3	3.5	26,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.24	2.24	2.16	2.16	218,000
Paxys Inc.	10.75	10.75	10.5	10.75	199,400
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.15	4.3	4.15	4.15	2,750,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.25	4.3	4.15	4.2	868,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	141,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8	477,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	3,020,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.29	6,690,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.023	0.025	0.023	0.024	402,200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.026	0.028	0.026	0.028	351,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0095	0.011	0.0095	.011 2	861,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.15	4.35	4.15	4.25	8,070,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.35	7,091,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	122,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.56	0.56	0.53	0.54	1,800,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.62	0.56	0.62	490,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	430,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.011	0.01	0.011	499,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	53,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.26	1.36	1.26	1.32	4,119,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.36	1.24	1.32	2,073,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.5	16	16.25	1,503,600

CURRENCIES

August 4, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.780640	1.000000	51.6380
Japan	Yen	0.006792	0.008700	0.4493
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473380	1.887400	97.4616
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100431	0.128652	6.6433
Switzerland	Franc	0.634409	0.812678	41.9651
Canada	Dollar	0.693841	0.888810	45.8964
Singapore	Dollar	0.494953	0.634035	32.7403
Australia	Dollar	0.593191	0.759878	39.2386
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.070774	2.652661	136.9781
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.208171	0.266667	13.7702
Brunei	Dollar	0.493389	0.632031	32.6368
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000110	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020619	0.026413	1.3639
UAE	Dirham	0.212540	0.272264	14.0592
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.281000	66.1483
Argentina	Peso	0.254280	0.325733	16.8202
Brazil	Real	0.357436	0.457875	23.6437
Denmark	Kroner	0.134043	0.171709	8.8667
India	Rupee	0.016788	0.021505	1.1105
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212130	0.271739	14.0321
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Canyon Woods	120 000	-
Capitol Hills	60,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls Call	Pls Call
Celebrity Sports	120 000	90 000
Club Filipino	100 000	-
Eaglerridge A/B*/C**	320,000*/Pls Call	Pls. Call*
Eastridge A/B*	Pls Call	-
Evercrest	65 000	-
Fairways & Bluewater	Pls Call	Pls Call
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	100,000/170 000*	Pls Call*
Lusitia Golf	Pls Call	300 000
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls Call	12,000 000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls Call	Pls Call
Manila Polo	2,900 000	2,700 000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls Call*	350 000
Makati Sports Club	180 000	160,000
Manila Yacht Club Ind.	300 000	-
Metropolitan Club A/B*	160,000	110,000
Mimosa Ind./C2*/C3**	Pls Call	Pls. Call/500,000**
Mt. Malarayat A	180 000	-
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/Pls. Call*/400,000**	150,000/350,000**
Punta Fuego	400 000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	160 000	Pls. Call
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/190,000*/250 000**	Pls Call*
Rockwell Leisure Club	Pls Call	Pls. Call
Royale Tagaytay CC	80 000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/150 000**	-
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Tagaytay Country Club	340 000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	680 000	-
Tagaytay Midlands	Pls Call	600,000
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Valley Golf	220 000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	100 000	-
Wack Wack Golf	Pls Call	6,200,000

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Baguio Country Club	550,000	500,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	60,000	-
Camp John Hay	280,000	240,000
Canlubang	500,000	400,000
Capitol Hills	55,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,900,000	1,400,000
Celebrity Sports Club	100,000	-
Club Filipino	95,000	80,000
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Forest Hills "B"	200,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	190,000	180,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	250,000	190,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	12,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,800,000
Manila Polo	2,900,000	2,700,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	330,000	-
Manila Southwoods "B"	700,000	600,000
Manila Yacht Club	260,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	200,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	550,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	190,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	350,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "A"	180,000	160,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	350,000	250,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	375,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	125,000
Sherwood "B"	-	90,000
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Tagaytay Midlands	630,000	-
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Fund prices are net of transaction costs. These investment funds are specific for variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.
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More banks tap debt markets

Investor appetite improving

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE BANKS ARE BRAVing the debt markets here and abroad to prepare for the shift to more stringent capital adequacy requirements imposed on them by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Philippine National Bank announced on Friday the successful closing of its subordinated debt or tier 2 notes offering after subscriptions reached P7.82 billion, or 2.6 times the original offer size of P3 billion.

To maximize the strong market response, PNB increased the issue size to P5.5 billion.

Proceeds from the offering, which was managed by ING Bank, would be used to strengthen PNB's capital base and boost its capital adequacy ratio from 17 percent to 22 percent.

Also, Bank of Commerce had secured the Monetary Board approval for the issuance of P300 million worth of additional tier 2 notes to the local market to complete its plan to boost capital by P1.5 billion.

BoC was earlier given the go-signal to offer as much as P1.5 billion worth of tier 2 notes but it issued only P1.2 billion. The exercise is seen to raise its capital adequacy ratio to about 16 percent from 12.4 percent.

BSP Deputy Governor for bank supervision Nestor Espenilla Jr. said there was a strong interest among banks to raise capital as soon as possible to take advantage of the favorable market conditions.

He said these banks would like to maximize the strong investor appetite for all kinds of instruments from Philippine issuers.

Espinilla said the success of the Bureau of Treasury's $750-million bond issue was a reflection of strong investor interest.

State-owned Development Bank of the Philippines and Land Bank of the Philippines also hope to complete their respective funding-raising activities overseas.

DBP hopes to pursue its planned perpetual bond offering of up to $130 million by next month after holding roadshows in Singapore, Hong Kong and London, DBP president Reynaldo David said.

Landbank also plans to raise as much as $150 million through a tier 2 subordinated debt offering.

While banks across the region are cleaning up the bad assets that piled up since the 1997 Asian currency turmoil, regulators are fine-tuning their regulatory and supervisory practices in line with the standards of the Bank for International Settlements which issued Basle 2 or the new framework for capital adequacy.

In the Philippines, tougher risk management guidelines have compelled banks to issue tier 2 instruments and consider other equity-like debt instruments, including perpetual bonds.

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2006

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INFOTECH

Editor Leo Magno

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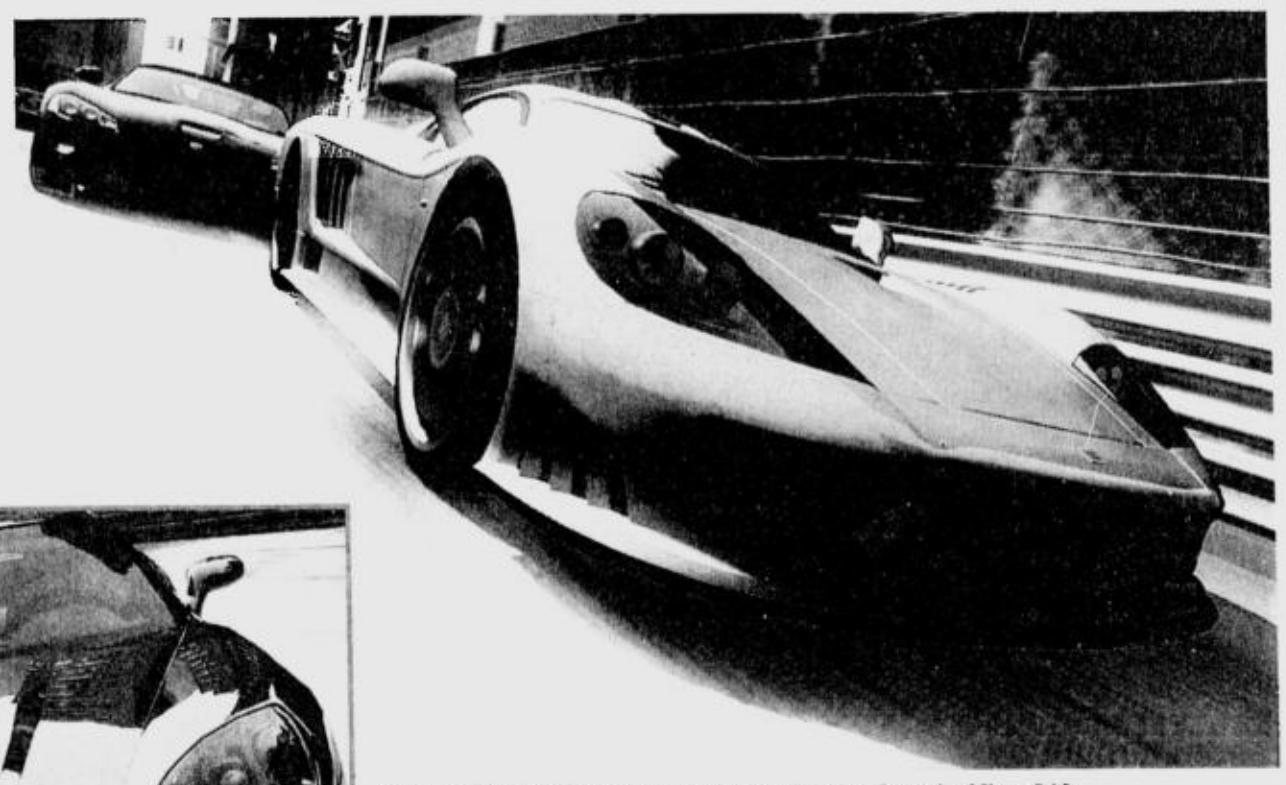
Filipino shines at US professional video game tilt



SCREENSHOTS from Project Gotham Racing 3 on the Xbox 360

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

WHILE THE PHILIPPINES is still getting its groove in professional video gaming, one Filipino is already a step ahead and is now competing at a professional level. In fact, the Philippine gaming team going to Monza, Italy for the upcoming World Cyber Games Finals might meet him there.

Just two weeks ago, 17-year-old Filipino Brent Dimapilis took second place in the Xbox 360 Project Gotham Racing 3 game category in the first Championship Gaming Invitational held in San Francisco, California.

Dimapilis, who went with the gamer tag "Naka360" (ostensibly meaning, "one with an Xbox 360" in Filipino), went home with $5,000 in prize money.

His rival and the champion of the PGR3 event, Emannuel "MASTER" Rodriguez, cleared the finish line first with $10,500 worth of prizes.

The Championship Gaming Series (CGS) is the latest professional gaming tournament in the US. A collaborative effort among DirecTV Inc., Microsoft Xbox Division, Mountain Dew, Fox Interactive Media, IGN Entertainment and Best Buy.

In an e-mail interview with Infotech, Dimapilis said the CGS was his first major attempt at professional gaming. He had previously joined the PGR3 category of the US World Cyber Games and is currently seeded number one, with a chance to compete in the upcoming WCG in October.

Dimapilis, who lives with his immigrant parents in Oxnard, California, said he chose to play PGR3 since it was the best racing game for the Xbox 360 console. So far, PG3 is the only game that he has played professionally.

"I picked up on the game real fast and after a few months, I got pretty good at the game and registered for the WCG online preliminaries where I seeded first and was given an opportunity to represent them at the Championship Gaming Invitational," Dimapilis said.

Dimapilis was born in the US to Filipino parents, a mother from Cebu and father from Makati. Like most parents, they were worried about their son playing too much videogames and initially did not support him.

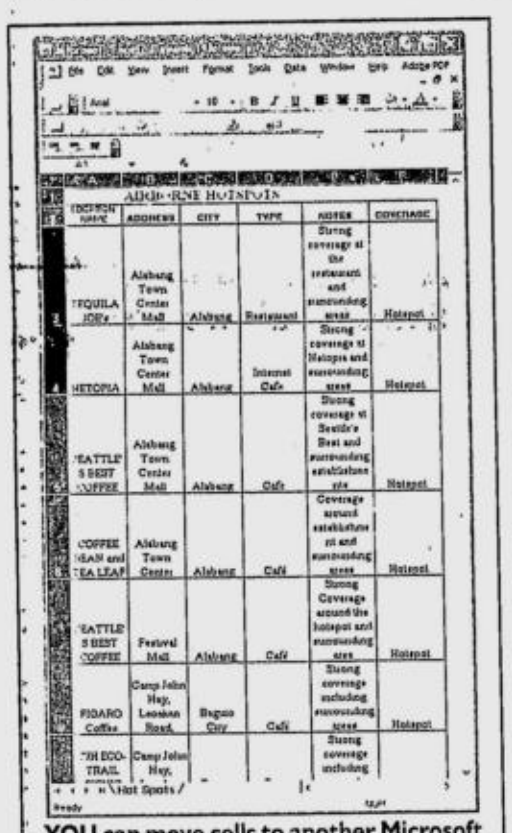
"They didn't really support me when gaming would take up the majority of my day and didn't really take professional gaming seriously, but after bringing home $5,000 from the CGI, some of their thoughts on professional gaming have changed," said Dimapilis.

Despite taking second place from the CGI and a cool $5,000, Dimapilis said he does not plan to go for a full-time job as a professional gamer but will make it a professional hobby, especially since he is preparing for college.

"I'll have to balance out gaming and education. But as long as I'm at the top of the game, there's no doubt I'll take every opportunity to compete. After college, I'd want to get some kind of career involved with making the next-generation consoles or producing video games, something along the lines of gaming," he said.

Dimapilis, who had visited the Philippines three times already, also wished good luck to the Philippine team to the WCG.

"I remember visiting a cybercafé in the Philippines where I was owned at Counter-Strike by some of the people there," he said.



YOU can move cells to another Microsoft Excel worksheet without using the cut/copy/paste function

Moving cells to another Worksheet without using cutting, pasting

By Jerry Liao

POWERTIPS

1) SELECT THE CELL OR CELLS THAT you intend to move or copy.

2) Hold down the ALT key as you drag a cell or range onto the tab of the desired worksheet.

3) Excel activates that worksheet and allows you to continue dragging the selection to the spot where you want to move it.

4) To copy the selection rather than move it to another worksheet, hold down CTRL + ALT while you drag.

For more tips, visit www.brainshare.com.ph. Announcement: Grab a copy of the Powertips 1 (Office 2000) & Powertips 2 (Office 2003) manuals. Available at all leading bookstores nationwide. For your comments and suggestions, e-mail techtvhost@yahoo.com.

Blogger starts 'PayPal Philippines' campaign

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

A SELF-DESCRIBED PROFESSIONAL Filipino blogger is leading a campaign to bring PayPal into the Philippines.

PayPal is a service that allows payments and money transfers through the Internet. It is emerging as an alternative way to traditional means of payment such as checks and money order. It is currently used to process payments for online vendors and auction sites like eBay. This e-commerce service in turn charges a fee.

Angelo Racoma (http://racoma.com.ph) argued that Filipino knowledge workers earning decent income from doing outsourced jobs would benefit from this campaign.

"We have a great pool of creative talent here that's just waiting to be tapped, such as writers, web and software developers and designers. However we have no easy and efficient payment gateway, and this turns prospective clients off," said Racoma in an entry in the "PayPal for the Philippines" blog (http://www.paypal4ph.com/blog).

Racoma said an "underground economy" that involves Filipino knowledge workers doing contract work for foreign firms now exists in the Philippines. They are not working for any business process outsourcing firm based in the country.

He said a handful of local professionals are doing projects from their homes. In his case, he now works for a North American firm. He is paid directly through money transfer. However, such a remittance system takes big cuts from his earnings.

"They are not convenient. If only we had PayPal in the Philippines, then I think we would be able to open to the world better access to our pool of talent. PayPal won't deal with us. It's probably because we have a history of having the potential for money laundering activities. Or maybe it's because of poor security in banking or credit card transactions," he added.

EBay acquired PayPal in October 2002. This was after eBay discovered that PayPal was the payment method of choice by more than 50 percent of eBay users, and the service competed with eBay's subsidiary Billpoint, a Wikipedia entry on PayPal said (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/PayPal).

Wikipedia is a website service that allows anyone to update entries which are definitions of various terms.

A local industry observer who declined to be named said the "PayPal for the Philippines" campaign could start lobbying with eBay Philippines.

He said that the campaign should also involve the banking sector.

Benguet high school linked to the Internet

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

BAGUIO CITY—A HIGH SCHOOL IN Itogon, Benguet has been wired to the Internet through an initiative of a Philippine mobile telecommunications company and its partners.

Under the "Smart Schools" program, the Alejo M. Pacalso Memorial National High School (AMPMNHS) was given a year of free wireless broadband Internet service.

Apart from providing connectivity to schools, the program also aims to provide relevant content to the over 700 students at the school.

Smart Communications officials said the company also worked with the Philippine Business for Social Progress organization, Microsoft Philippines, and learn.ph to extend information and communications technology training to teachers at the school.

AMPMNHS was previously a beneficiary of a computer equipment grant from the Department of Trade and Industry under the latter's PCs for Public Schools program.

Smart said it has connected around 50 schools since it launched its program in December 2004.

Cops raid Tacloban shop

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

POLICE SEIZED HARDWARE AND ILLEGAL software worth over a million pesos in a raid in Tacloban City.

Government agents raided two establishments of the Electrocomputer Data Systems located in Del Pilar Street and Zamora Street, in Tacloban City.

Items confiscated include equipment used for the illegal copying of software programs from Microsoft and other software makers.

Police said Eddie S. Uy, owner of the two EDS establishments, now faces a copyright infringement case.

Police also noted that EDS is an established computer store in Tacloban City.

The Pilipinas Anti-Piracy Team led this continuing campaign against software piracy in the Philippines. The group's members include the National Bureau of Investigation, the Optical Media Board and the Philippine National Police.

Agents from the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group Anti-Fraud and Commercial Crimes Division (CIDG-AFCCD) from Metro Manila and from Region 8 conducted simultaneous raids after getting a search warrant from Judge Antonio M. Eugenio Jr. of Branch 24 of the Manila Regional Trial Court.

In a statement, PNP-CIDG Director Jesus Versoza warned the police will conduct more raids in other urban areas in the country.

"It is a shame that a supposed to be legitimate business has to turn to scrupulous activities such as selling of pirated software just to earn additional profits. The PNP will continue to go after violators of the IPR law as directed to us by President Arroyo to intensify the government's campaign against piracy," added Versoza.

The raid in Tacloban City followed similar raids in Bataan and Olongapo, police said.

Volunteer engineers start computer livelihood training in RP

By Erwin Oliva
Contrubutor

CANADIAN VOLUNTEERS collectively called "Engineers Without Borders" (EWB) is now engaged in computer livelihood projects in the Philippines, Infotech learned.

Under a project called "Sharing Computer Access Locally and Abroad," (Scala) the group is establishing computer livelihood training centers nationwide. Some of these centers are located in Irisan, Baguio City and Lamut, Ifugao.

According to the group's website (http://www.ewb.ca/en/whatwedo/overseas/projects/scala.html), the project aims to create jobs for an estimated 12 million out-of-school youths between the ages of 15 and 24 who are unemployed.

Citing the National Youth Commission's studies, the EWB said there is an urgent need to give underprivileged Filipino youth access to livelihood programs.

The EWB is working with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) on this project. They have already developed a model for the computer livelihood training centers. Both are now working to establish 15 centers throughout the Philippines. EWB members in Canada provide funds and computers for the Scala project.

The EWB website said volunteers arrived early this year. They are now working in the Philippines to help build the DSWD's capacity to support and expand the project.

The goal is to let DSWD run the program independently, EWB said.

"The Philippines is a distinctly appropriate country for creating a program involving modern communication technologies because of its location, English language skills, high literacy rate and emerging IT sector. As such, computer literate graduates are expected to have marketable skills and be employable within their community," read an entry in the EWB website.

RP IT spending to grow 10.4% in next 5 years: IDC

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

RESEARCH FIRM INTERNATIONAL DATA Corporation (IDC) predicts a 10.4-percent annual growth of IT spending among Philippine companies from now until the year 2010.

In its report titled "Philippine IT Spending User Segmentation 2006-2010," IT equipment such as personal digital assistants, desktop computers and networking products would still be the main priority among local enterprises, encompassing 67 percent of all IT spending in 2006.

This is followed by 22 percent for the IT services spending and lastly, 11 percent is for software purchases.

Spending on services and software is expected to be driven by complexity of IT infrastructure, which has been demanding more data security and management processes.

Most of the demand would come from the communications and media industries, banking and discrete manufacturing verticals.

The demand is also spurred by companies wanting to achieve a higher level of business efficiency to be able to offer innovations and to remain competitive.

The IDC report also compared IT spending in 2005, which was just slightly different in terms of spending on hardware, which was pegged at 68 percent.

However, IT services expenditure was at 21 percent and software spending was at 11 percent.

IDC stated that 2005 was a turning point for the Philippines as it showed tremendous overall growth for the IT industry, which hit 20 percent to reach $1.4 billion brought about by fresh IT investments and renewed commitment from the end-user community.

Auto parts maker pursues 4-yr investment program

Firm to install new equipment, test systems

By Ronnel W. Domingo

GERMAN FIRM TEMIC AUTOMOtive Philippines Inc. is pushing ahead with its four-year, 77-million-euro investment program to support its vehicle parts manufacturing operations in the country, a company official said.

Tapi is the local unit of tire maker Continental AG and is under the parent firm's Frankfurt-based Continental Automotive Systems, which in 2005 acquired Temic-the automotive electronics business of industry giant Daimler-Chrysler.

Thomas Sattelberger, who sits at the executive board of Continental AG, said Tapi was set to lay out an average of 15 million euros a year under the investment program, which would culminate with an outlay of up to 20 million euros in 2007.

Sattelberger said the additional investments would come in the form of new plant equipment, machinery, test systems as well as intensive training for employees.

Tapi is headquartered at the FTI Estate in Taguig. It has a manufacturing facility in Calamba, Laguna, which represents Tapi's major investment in 2005.

The official said Tapi turns out an average of 250 million euros in export value yearly, a fifth of which is produced in Calamba.

The company operates production lines that churn out electronic components and systems for electronic brake systems and body electronics that are shipped out to assemblers that carry the brands BMW, Toyota, Nissan, Ford, Audi, Volvo and Kia.

Also, Sattelberger said Tapi was strengthening ties with local universities to build up a system for upgrading the skills of its workers.

One such tie up is with the Technological University of the Philippines, where Tapi has set up what has been dubbed as the Continental University-a single room dedicated for the exclusive training of Tapi employees.

The training program follows a worldwide Continental program of intensive training for company employees aimed at establishing an internal foundation of quality based on sustained education for workers.

Sattelberger said Tapi had so far set aside some $150,000 for the training of at least 20 student-workers.

He said that globally, Continental had set aside 50 million euros for training.

The official added that Tapi was collaborating with other educational institutions such as DualTech System, Polytechnic University of the Philippines and the Don Bosco system.

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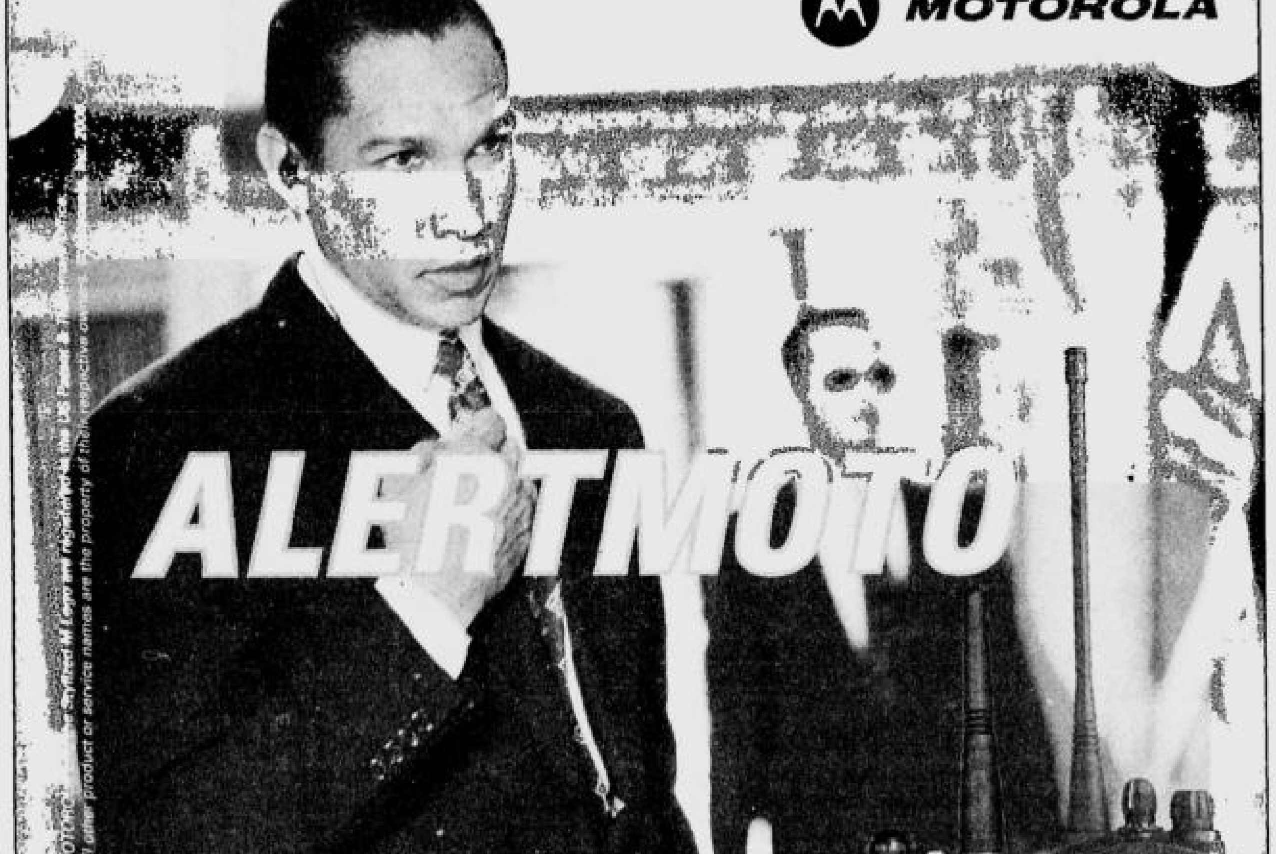

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✓ Executive Lifestyle Pavilion
✓ New Technology Pavilion
FREE ENTRANCE
SHOW HOURS:
Aug. 9 - 11 11:00 am - 7:00 pm
Aug. 12 11:00 am - 5:30 pm
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS
- More than 12,000 products, technology & services on display
- Over 300 booths on display (including outdoor)
- Featuring a New Technology Pavilion showcasing new products to be introduced to the Philippine market
- Featuring an Executive Lifestyle Pavilion showcasing products & the latest amenities available for corporate executives & professionals including business opportunities & career growth
- 2006 DMC Technics World DJ Championship National Elimination
- Moving head light shootout by top brands
- Powered-speaker demo by leading audio manufacturers
- Mini concert by various artists from Vicor Music, Dyna Records & XAX Sound Entertainment
- 22 free seminars & product presentations
- Specialized seminar by the Audio Engineering Society (AES)

AUGUST 9 -12, 2006 • WORLD TRADE CENTER
SCHEDULE OF FREE SEMINARS & PRODUCT PRESENTATIONS
Aug. 9 (Wednesday) Seminar Room 1
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Interactive World of Business Touch Screen Board for Effective Product Presentation by QUALIPLUS INT'L.
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm WiMAX and VOIP by Soma Networks
3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Remote Video Monitoring Lets You Take Control of Your Business from Anywhere in the World by Teleeye Phils., Inc.
4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Money making ABC by GAKKEN PHILS
Aug. 10 (Thursday) Seminar Room 1
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm The Latest Time Record System Has Finally Arrived! by DAVID LINK MLA. CORP.
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm High Impact Presentation by GAKKEN
3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Business Can Be Simple by CANON MKTG.
4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Asset Tracking - A Better Solution by CHASE TECHNOLOGIES
Aug. 11 (Friday) Seminar Room 1
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Nestle Food Services - Your Total Office Solutions Provider by PHIL. VENDING
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm eCommerce Best SMS Gateway Application by MANNASOFT
3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Microphone Seminar by EVI PHILS.
4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Stop Seeing the World in Black & White by UBIX
Aug. 12 (Saturday) Seminar Room 1
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Wireless Presentation by MICRODATA
3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Interactive World of Business Touch Screen Board for Effective Product Presentation by QUALIPLUS INT'L.
4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 9)
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Digidesign Pro-tools System by CHALLENGE SYSTEM
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Sound Solutions by AUDIO BY DESIGN
3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Philippe Cables & Sound Accessories 2006 by PHILIPPE GADGET & ACCESSORIES, INC.
4:30 pm - 4:45 pm NEXT MOBILE INC
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 10)
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm TUP c/o U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Lipro Wireless Microphone System by MICROACOUSTIC
3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Sennheiser by STAGE CRAFT INT'L.
4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Portable Routing System by FORSC INC INK
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 11)
1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Revenue Channels for Telcos Mera Systems
2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Project Studio & DAW Ideas by FORERUNNER TECHNOLOGIES
3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Digidesign Pro tools System by CHALLENGE SYSTEM
SPECIAL FREE SEMINAR
August 9 (Wed) Seminar Room 2
3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Personal Awareness & Leadership Seminar by: Mr. Jody P Reyes Trainor (Power Speak Inc.)
EXECUTIVE LIFESTYLE PAVILION FORUM
11:00 am & 4:00 pm August 9 - 12 (Daily) Seminar Room 4
SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES
August 9 - 12 (Wed - Sat)
Moving Head Light Shootout (Daily)
1:00 pm - 1:30 pm by JT Stalino
4:00 pm - 4:30 pm Forerunner Technologies
Powered Speaker Demo (Daily)
11:00 am - 11:30 am by And Sons Corporation, Daichi Electronics Inc, Forerunner Technologies, JT Stalino, Micro Acoustics
5:00 pm - 5:30 pm
Outdoor Demo / Showcase (Daily)
STAGE AREA ACTIVITIES
Aug. 9 (Wednesday)
10:30 am - 11:00 am Opening Ceremony
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm Mini-concert by Vicor Music Artists
Aug. 10 (Thursday)
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Mini-concert by DYNA Music Artists
5:00 pm - 6:00 pm
Aug. 11 (Friday)
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Mini-concert by XAX Music Artists
4:00 pm - 5:00 pm
Aug. 12 (Saturday)
2:30 pm - 5:30 pm 2006 DMC Technics World DJ Championship National Eliminations
The above schedules are subject to change without prior notice
AUDIO ENGINEERING SOCIETY (AES) SEMINARS (Seminar Room 2)
Aug 10 (Thurs.)
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Home Studio Basics
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm Acoustics & A/V Designs for Christian Church
Aug 11 (Fri.)
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Understanding Signal Processing in a DAW System
3:30 pm - 5:30 pm Digital Platform in Sound System Integration
Aug 12 (Sat.)
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Acoustical Measurements
2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Application of Acoustical Measurements in Sound System Design
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Corruption charges vs the insurance commissioner

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

CORRUPTION CHARGES HAVE been filed at the Ombudsman against Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo.

The charges revolve around the plan to put up a Compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) processing center, more commonly known in the insurance industry as the clearing house, where every CTPL policy will be electronically processed and authenticated.

The clearing house concept makes sure that the premiums and taxes are collected and remitted and, most important, claims are paid quickly and promptly.

The clearing house is designed to finally solve the long-festering problems of fake CTPL policies where the government is deprived of rightful revenue, and, worse, valid claims remain unpaid.

The clearing house makes wide use of information technology. The broker or agent is connected electronically with the clearing house, the participating bank and the LTO. To register your car, you first pay the premium and taxes to the insurance broker or agent of your choice (or you pay over-the-counter at the bank). The agent, in turn, goes to his laptop and e-mails his bank to debit his account with the amount you paid. The agent hands you the printout, which is your CTPL policy or certificate of cover (COC). You or your agent brings the COC to the LTO. The computer at LTO authenticates your COC. The registration goes through. This is the only way you can register your car.

Since your COC is authentic, there is no reason why a claim cannot be paid in the regulatory five days after the submission of all supporting papers.

The insurance companies, all members of good standing of the Philippine Insurance and Reinsurance Association Inc. (Pira) set up a separate corporation to run the clearing house, under the eagle-eyed supervision of the Insurance Commission.

Since the vehicle owner has to buy his CTPL policy only through the clearing house, the Commissioner has been charged with establishing a "combination in restraint of trade" or a cartel, which is not allowed under the Constitution. This is the most ludicrous of the charges leveled against the Commissioner.

The Constitution does not allow a combination in restraint of trade or a cartel, because it restricts or avoids competition. Without competition in a free and open market, prices are kept artificially high, goods are shoddy, and services lousy. But in CTPL policies, there is no competition in pricing or product design. Since the policy is compulsory, the wordings and prices are fixed. The competition is in the servicing of the policy.

In the Escobillo clearing house, the vehicle owner has full freedom to choose from some 90 insurance companies. He also can choose his insurance broker or agent. If, later on, he finds the services of his insurer, broker or agent unsatisfactory, he can always switch. There is absolutely no restraint of trade.

It is true that an insurance company has to be a member of good standing of Pira. But who wants to buy a CTPL policy from a company that is not a member of good standing?

Finally, there is the little known provision in the insurance code which says that, if you walk into the largest insurance office in the archipelago, you cannot be refused a CTPL policy even if all you want is to insure your one and only rattletrap tricycle. Where is the restraint of trade?

I am sure the Ombudsman will throw the case out in record time.

Meralco, Napocor to sign deal

Agreement to allow large customers to choose their power suppliers

By Abigail L. Ho

MANILA ELECTRIC CO. and National Power Corp. will forge within the next two weeks an agreement covering the "Customer Choice Program," which will allow some of Meralco's large customers to choose their power suppliers.

Under the scheme, Meralco customers with an average monthly demand of at least 1 megawatt (MW) can source their power requirement from their supplier of choice.

Meralco president and chief operating officer Jesus Francisco said Meralco had provided Napocor with load profiles that could be of help in implementing the program.

Francisco said that with these load profiles, Napocor should do simulations on how the Customer Choice Program could be implemented. The simulations would be based on the state firm's time-of-use (TOU) rates.

The commercial operation of the wholesale electricity spot market (Wesm), which started last June 23, made the process of formulating the Customer Choice Program guidelines more complicated, he said.

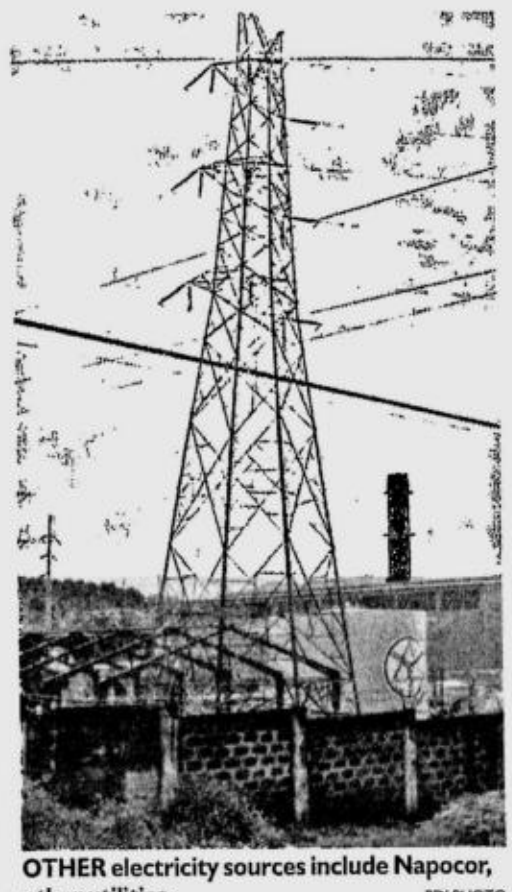
"The entry of the Wesm introduced some questions, so some customers may rethink their plans to participate in the program," he said.

In a letter sent to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in April, Meralco chair and chief executive officer Manuel Lopez gave an "unconditional offer" to exclude big industrial and commercial customers from the distribution utility's captive market, even before the declaration of retail competition and open access.

Shortly after making that offer, Meralco informed its customers of the planned Customer Choice Program, saying in a letter that those who would not qualify for or benefit from Napocor's TOU rates could still opt for Meralco's average mixed generation charges.

The Customer Choice Program could be implemented immediately after the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the details and mechanics of the new arrangement.

Once implemented, the program will enable Meralco's large commercial and industrial customers to take advantage of Napocor's TOU rates by shifting their load to off-peak hours, or times when rates were lower.



OTHER electricity sources include Napocor, other utilities PDI PHOTO

The TOU scheme provides Napocor customers with flexible hourly rates that are lowest during off-peak hours, or between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m., and highest during peak hours, or from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Sundays and holidays are also considered off-peak period.

Rates are also lower during the wet season, or from July to December, when electricity demand is usually lower due to the colder weather. Hydroelectric plants are also able to produce more power during these months.

DBP posts 37% increase in net profit to ₱2B

By Doris C. Dumlao

STATE-OWNED DEVELOPMENT BANK OF the Philippines posted P2 billion in net profit in the first semester, up by 37 percent from a year ago.

DBP president Reynaldo David said the bank's gross income rose by 15.84 percent in the first six months to P9.07 billion from P7.83 billion a year ago. Its gross loan portfolio rose 39.36 percent to P133.4 billion.

"The bank is on track to achieving its development targets for the year, and it has remained a financially sound government financial institution," David said in a statement.

"Our good financial returns have given us better leverage to invest in new initiatives enabling us to effectively and efficiently pursue our thrusts and programs designed to help the government attain its development agenda for the country," he added.

Exclusive of inter-bank loans, DBP financed P56.01 billion in developmental projects, higher than the P38.77 billion disbursed to commercial projects during the period.

David said DBP's portfolio for developmental projects reflected an increasing involvement in four priority thrusts—infrastructure and logistics, micro and small and medium enterprise development, environmental management and social services.

Total deposits rose by 39.1 percent to P61.48 billion from P44.2 billion in June 2005.

DBP's total assets reached P228.54 billion, up by 26.62 percent from P180.49 billion during the same period in 2005.

Its past due ratio stood at 5.91 percent of total loans, lower than the industry average of 9.2 percent as of March 2006.

The bank's capital adequacy ratio stood at 24.93 percent, well above the regulatory minimum of 10 percent.

DENR urged to stop mine firm operations in Palawan

MINING FIRM CITINICKEL MINES AND Development Corp. has asked the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the provincial government of Palawan to stop the operations of another mining company, Platinum Group Metals Corp. (PGMC), for allegedly over-extracting and exporting nickel ore and other minerals in violation of the country's mining laws.

The call was contained in separate complaints filed with the DENR and the provincial government of Palawan.

Citinickel, in a statement, claimed PGMC was extracting nickel ore and other minerals on the basis of two small scale mining permits issued by Palawan Gov. Joel Reyes in November 2004. Under each permit, PGMC is allowed to extract no more than 50,000 metric tons of ore within two years.

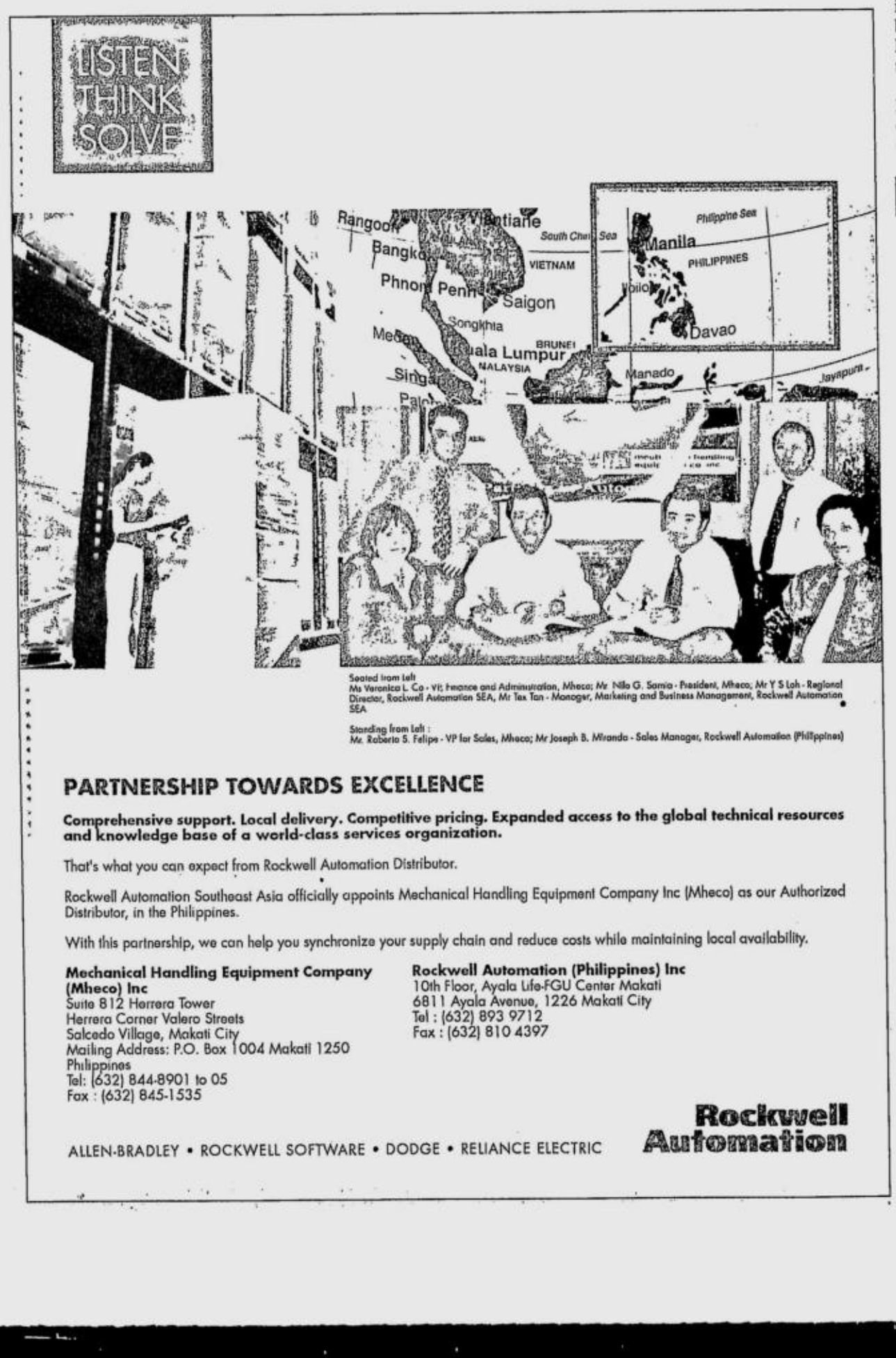
However, Citinickel claimed that photos of PGMC's actual operations, use of heavy equipment, ore transport permits issued by Gov. Reyes, and copies of the bills of lading showed that PGMC had extracted and exported about 300,000 metric tons of ore to date, far more than what is allowed by its local permits. Also, Citinickel stressed that PGMC's use of heavy equipment showed that the company was actually engaged in large, not small-scale, mining operations.

Also, the company statement said that neighboring communities had sounded the alarm bells over alleged pollution problems due to PGMC's mining operations. It said that farmers in the surrounding areas of the mine site in the Municipality of Narra had complained of heavy siltation resulting in reduced palay output in their respective farms.

"To protect the environment against the activities of PGMC, which has shown utter disrespect for mining laws and regulations, as well as disregard for the conditions of its permits, it is now imperative that PGMC's small scale mining permits be withdrawn, canceled or revoked to protect public interest," said Citinickel vice president Ferdinand Pallera in the statement.

He added that Olympic Mines and Development Corp.—Citinickel's predecessor and original owner of the Narra mine site—terminated its operating agreement with PGMC on April 24, 2006, citing the same violations. Olympic allegedly complained about PGMC's alleged misrepresentation that it was the owner of Olympic's mine sites when PGMC applied for its own Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA). Olympic later sold its interests in the said mine site to Citinickel through a deed of assignment dated June 9, 2006.

Citinickel claimed that despite the termination of the operating agreement with PGMC, the latter continued to operate and undertake mining works at the Narra mine site without its consent and over its continuing objections.



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Ms Veronica L. Co - VP, Finance and Administration, Mheco; Mr Nilo G. Samia - President, Mheco; Mr Y S Loh - Regional Director, Rockwell Automation SEA; Mr Tex Tan - Manager, Marketing and Business Management, Rockwell Automation SEA

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Demand for Manila cordage up on renewed oil drilling activities

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE FRENZIED SEARCH FOR new crude oil sources in the United States and the Middle East has led to an increase in the country's exports of cordage, exporters said.

Exports of cordage made from the abaca fiber—one of the country's oldest agriculture-based exports—have increased by 6 percent to 6,120 tons in the first six months, said Manila Cordage Co. president and CEO Ricardo V. Camua.

"We are now experiencing an improvement in demand as the high fuel prices triggered more oil drilling in the US and in other countries," Camua said in an interview.

Demand hardly grew in previous years as synthetic substitutes took over the cordage's market, particularly in the industrial and agricultural processing sectors.

He said higher demand also improved the price of Manila cordage by 30 US cents to $1.50 a kilo.

Manila Cordage is the country's largest producer of Manila cordage.

"We may see this improving demand until the end of the year," he added.

The Philippines is the world's only exporter and main supplier of abaca pulp, fiber and cordage.

Take closer look at agri, UN tells developing nations

Vital sector has been neglected, UNDP report says

By Ronnel W. Domingo

DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE ASIA-Pacific like the Philippines need to put renewed emphasis on agriculture, especially the production of basic food crops, to protect the livelihood of the poor amid a global drive toward free trade.

This was one of the findings of the United Nations Development Program's Asia-Pacific Human Development Report 2006, released globally late last June and to be publicized locally next week.

"Agriculture, the bedrock of the poor, has been neglected and must be given new prominence because (the region) has become a major importer under free trade," UNDP said.

The report showed that cheap imports brought in through free trade have led to a sharp decline in domestic production of food staples in the Asia-Pacific, which had been a major food exporter in the past.

Data from the World Bank show that Philippine agricultural production account for 15-25 percent of GDP or total output from all sectors within a year.

This puts the country in the same league as population giants China, India and Indonesia as well as the Fiji, Kiribati, Sri Lanka and Vietnam.

Thailand, which some scholars say is the closest comparable Southeast Asian economy to the Philippines, is grouped with the rich markets—Hong Kong, Singapore, Japan, Australia, South Korea, Mauritius and Malaysia—that had the same overall global level of agricultural output at no more than 10 percent of GDP.

The less well-off countries of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Mongolia, Bhutan and Cambodia produce between a quarter and two-fifths of their GDP from agriculture, while the least well-off—Nepal, Laos, Afghanistan and Myanmar—depend on agriculture for 40-55 percent of their domestic output.

"(Still), the promise of quick profits is encouraging rich farmers and agribusiness interests to move out of food production toward cultivation of more profitable commercial crops," the report explained.

Moreover, UNDP said the poorest countries have become especially dependent on the global food market for basic food supply, considering their markets have been opened up for agricultural trade far more than those of the richer ones.

The agency added that trade expansion could damage poor farmers' interests by causing sharp declines in prices, increases in the cost of inputs such as fertilizers, withdrawal of government services for irrigation or to farm-to-market roads, among others.

UN Assistant Secretary General Hafiz A. Pasha said: "Human development as a whole would suffer if, as a result of trade expansion, small-scale farmers are out-competed by imports but do not have access to an alternative source of livelihood."

The report said that a remedy for the situation was for developing countries to promote the development of agriculture through price supports, affordable loans and other aid as well as strengthening land reform.

Jollibee opens 11th US outlet

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FAST FOOD GIANT JOLLIBEE FOODS Corp. is going deeper into the United States market with the opening of its 11th store in Panorama City in Southern California.

Jollibee vice-president Tommy Y. King said its Panorama store—which spans 3,332 square feet—opened last July 30 with a budget of roughly $450,000.

Jollibee will increase its US network to 12 stores when it opens its Las Vegas outlet in February 2007.

Unfazed by the expected slowdown in sales growth this year, Jollibee said it would continue to reach out to overseas markets, particularly in China, United States and India, company officials said.

It is set to open its first store in China - in Guangzhou province - and a Red Ribbon bakeshop in New Jersey, Jollibee chair Tony Tan-Caktiong earlier told reporters.

The company also plans to open 20 restaurants under the Yonghe King brand in China this year. In India, it plans to acquire a fast-food chain.

Jollibee is spending about P1.5 billion for capital expenditure this year, which will include the setting up of 100-120 stores here and abroad.

Jollibee spends about $400,000 to put up a store, chief financial officer Ysmael Baysa said.

It is backed up by P1 billion in cash from operations, P17 billion in assets, and zero debt, he said.

For any acquisition, it has an existing credit line of P8.5 billion, he added.

Sales growth of the fast-food giant was expected to have weakened in the second quarter because of reduced consumer spending and increased utility costs.

System-wide sales—sales at both company-owned and franchised stores—rose 15.2 percent year-on-year to P10.4 billion in the first quarter.

LRTA proposes airport link

By Riza T. Olchondra

TRAVELERS COMING FROM AS FAR NORTH as Monumento may soon be able to reach the Ninoy Aquino International Airport and the Manila Domestic Passenger Terminal using just one train, the Light Rail Transit Authority (LRTA) said.

This is due to the proposed construction of a line that will connect LRT1 to the airport terminals, which would greatly ease traffic and help increase productivity, according to LRTA administrator Mel Robles.

Robles credited the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) for initiating the proposed connection between LRT1 and the airport terminals, adding that that Naia's Terminal 3 may be added to the route when it opens.

Robles said, however, that excluding Naia3 could make the project proceed much earlier at a cost of only $60 million. He said including Naia3 would raise the project cost because an underground tunnel has to be built to accommodate the terminal.

The administrator said once Line 1 is connected with the domestic and international airports, even those coming from as far North as Monumento can take just one train and get to the airport terminals in about 45 minutes. The same ease can be assured for northbound travelers leaving the airport.

"The benefit here is that just like in foreign countries, (our) airports (will) have a railway system," Robles stressed. "You could even just assign one train for the whole line at the airport."

"Imagine, they just have to get on one train," the administrator said in Filipino. "Just imagine how many cars go to the airport, (including) the well-wishers."

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BIR out to redefine death, taxes

Revenue officials seek to impose estate tax on death benefits

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE IS studying a proposed regulation that will impose an estate tax to beneficiaries of insurance death benefits, particularly if the policies were purchased from foreign-registered insurance firms.

According to Revenue Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag, the BIR is reviewing whether the proposal is subject to legal hindrances.

Buñag said imposing an estate tax to beneficiaries of death benefits from policies sold by foreign-registered insurance firms could be a good way to protect Philippine registered insurance companies and level the playing field.

The move to review the imposition of estate tax was prompted by the problem confronting local insurance firms.

The Philippine Life Insurance Association Inc. (PLIA) earlier said the competitiveness of the domestic industry was being threatened by the unfair competition posed by insurance firms not registered to operate in the Philippines.

The group said that while Philippine registered firms pay various taxes imposed on the sale of insurance policies, such as documentary stamp tax and premium tax, those that are not registered to operate in the Philippines are able to escape payment of taxes while getting a substantial market share.

PLIA has a pending complaint before the Insurance Commission against Swiss-based insurance firm Zurich, which is accused of selling insurance products in the Philippines although it is not registered to operate in the country.

PLIA said that aside from Zurich, there are other smaller insurance firms doing the same.

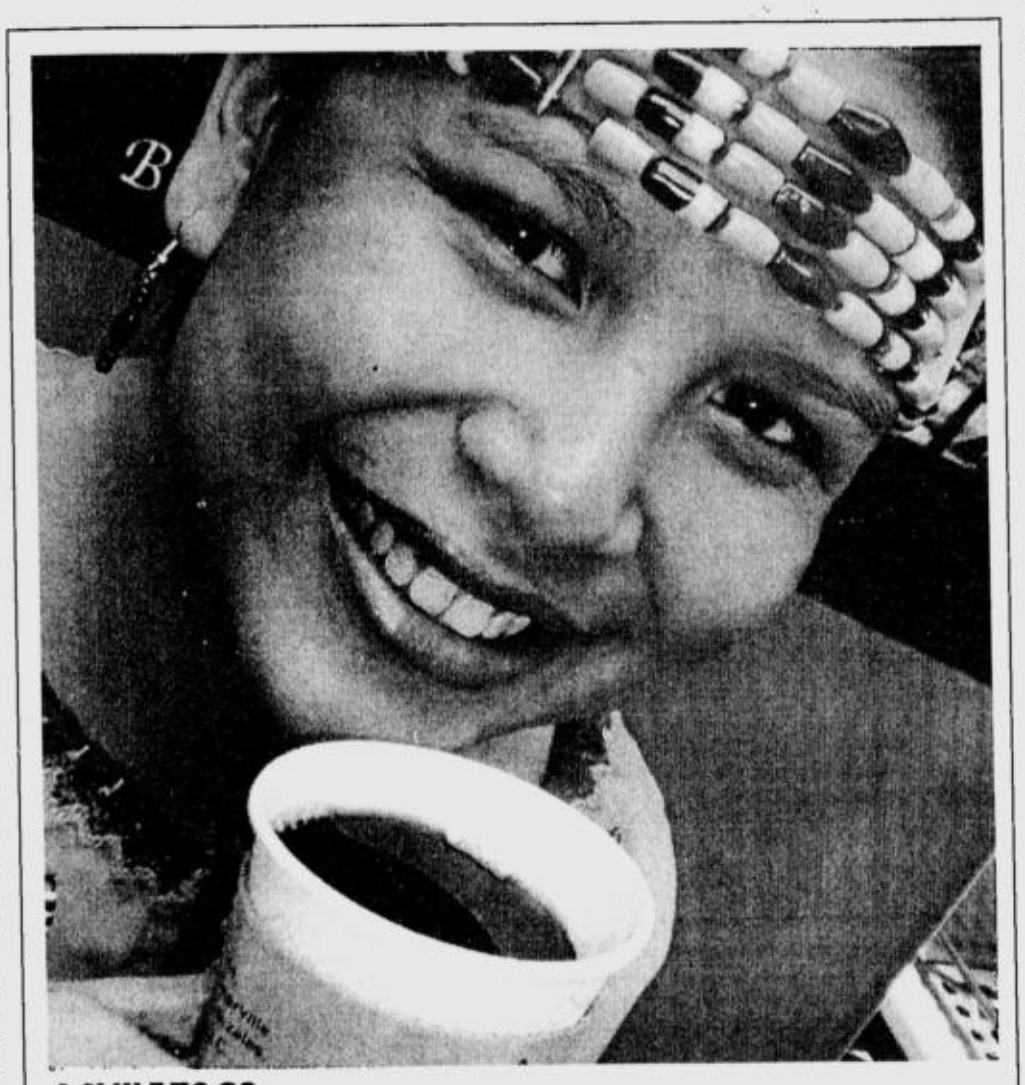
Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo recently met with representatives of Zurich to discuss the complaint of the Philippine firms. Zurich officials denied selling insurance products in the Philippines, but PLIA strongly insisted Zurich insurance policies proliferate in the local market.

Zurich has been asked by the Insurance Commission to make a public advertisement that clearly states that it was not selling insurance policies in the Philippines.

Currently, beneficiaries of death benefits coming from an "irrevocable" type of insurance policy are not subject to estate tax. Only those covered by a "revocable" type of insurance policy are charged the said tax.

The "irrevocable" type of insurance policy does not allow changing the beneficiary of the death benefit, while the "revocable" type allows such a change.

The rate of estate tax ranges from 5 percent to 20 percent depending on the amount of wealth received.



A SMILE TO GO
Torrential rains in the region fail to dampen the smile on this girl's face as she sips a cup of hot coffee courtesy of the Cordillera Coffee Company. Over 60 familes in Benguet derive benefits from the Cordillera plantation that grows rich Arabica beans. EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Mindanao assured of power supply

By Abigail L. Ho

RESIDENTS OF MINDANAO NEED NOT worry about power outages even if a recent landslide happens to dislocate pipelines carrying steam to the Mt. Apo II geothermal power facility in Davao.

According to the National Power Corp., the dislocated steam pipelines resulted in the outage of some 50 megawatts (MW) from the Mindanao grid.

Initial assessments indicate that it will take around a month to repair the damage.

While undertaking the repairs, Napocor vice president for Mindanao generation Pasayud Macarambon said the state firm had already identified other power sources to prevent outages in the Mindanao grid, which has a peak demand of more than 1,000 MW.

"Everything is under control," Macarambon said in a statement over the weekend. "We are closely monitoring the power situation. We have already arranged for replacement power coming from various sources such as the Davao Light and Power Corp. We would like to assure the people of Mindanao that Napocor is doing its best to provide them with their electricity needs."

Despite such short notice, he said DLPC had agreed to initially provide between 20 MW and 30 MW of power, should the system require it.

Other contingency measures include maximizing the dispatch of Napocor-owned power plants, land-based facilities and power barges.

The Mt. Apo II geothermal power facility is owned by PNOC-EDC and is one of Napocor's independent power producers.

Gokongwei firms to raise $220M in share offering

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PROPERTY GIANT ROBINSONS Land Corp. of John Gokongwei Jr. is pushing through with its plan to raise $200-$220 million from the sale of old and new shares to foreign and local investors possibly within the year, sources said.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange late Friday, Gokongwei's flagship firm JG Summit Holdings Inc., its subsidiary Universal Robina Corp. and affiliate JG Summit Capital Services said they had agreed to collectively sell portion of their holdings in RLC—about 482.8 million shares—to raise the capital.

In all, about 932.8 million shares are expected to be sold. Of the total, 51.75 percent—or 482.8 million shares—are existing shares that will make up the secondary offer.

The remaining 450 million shares to be sold are new or primary shares.

JG Summit Group now controls about 94 percent of RLC's outstanding capital, company sources said.

After the share offer, JG Summit will retain majority ownership of the property firm but its holdings will be reduced to about 60 percent.

Of the 482.8 million secondary shares, JG Summit will account for 9.7 million shares; URC, 410.5 million shares; and JG Summit Capital, 62.6 million shares.

RLC is bent on raising fresh capital either this year or early next year to gain fresh funds for major housing projects in the coming years.

The price of the offer has yet to be announced.

RLC recently announced that for fiscal year 2006, its net income from October to June—the company's first three quarters—grew 20 percent to P1.23 billion from P1.02 billion in the same period last year.

The company's fiscal year ends on Sept. 30.

Total revenues for the past three quarters hit P4.83 billion. There was no comparative figure for the previous fiscal year.

RLC executive vice-president Frederick D. Go said revenues largely came from the firm's commercial centers division.

In a statement, RLC said its commercial centers division contributed almost half of the company's gross revenues.

The company's shopping centers, led by flagship stores Robinsons Galleria and Robinsons Place Manila, recorded gross revenue of P2.35 billion.

Robinsons Place Pioneer, which recently opened, and the redeveloped Robinsons Place Novaliches also contributed to the rental growth. The company said it would continue to focus its efforts on improving tenant mix, enhancing mall facilities, and intensifying marketing efforts.

"The company will be expanding its retail presence all over the country, ensuring our continued growth," Go said. "We have several metropolitan and provincial malls now in the pipeline, and construction will commence within 2006. We will soon complete the renovation of the Galleria West Wing and are midway in the construction of the Manila mall expansion."

RLC is the real estate arm of JG Summit Holdings Inc., one of the country's largest conglomerates with diverse interests in branded consumers foods, agro-industrial and commodity food products, textile, telecommunications, petrochemicals, air transportation and financial services.

Audit body sought for BIR, Customs

REPRESENTATIVE HERMINIO TEVES, newly elected chair of the House committee on ways and means, said he would push for the creation of a body that will audit the revenue collection of the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs.

Teves said the creation of the body would fulfill the House committee's role in ensuring the proper collection of taxes and duties.

The congressman said there was a dire need to impose reforms in the way revenues are collected, given the huge leaks that needed to be plugged. If all potential revenues were collected, the government could easily wipe out its budget deficit, he said.

The government could then post a balance budget as early as next year, instead of the official target of 2008, Teves added.

The Department of Finance has estimated that the government loses P50 billion to P65 billion in potential revenues a year due to tax evasion or inefficiency in collection.

Teves said the audit body would assess the performance of revenue agencies in terms of collecting taxes and duties they ought to turn over to the state. The body would likewise be tasked to determine problems areas that are sources of revenue leaks.

The congressman also wants a revenue-forecasting body to be established to complement the functions of the proposed audit body. The revenue-forecasting body would be tasked with determining the revenue collection targets of the BIR and the BOC.

The BIR this year is tasked to collect at least P675.4 billion in taxes, an amount that is way too high, according to BIR officials.

The BOC is assigned to collect P197 billion in duties and value-added tax on oil.

The two agencies, the biggest sources of government revenues among line agencies, are hard pressed to meet their goals to help achieve the target of reducing the budget deficit to only P125 billion this year from last year's P146.8 billion.

Teves, father of Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and who represents Negros Oriental, was elected by the Lower House to head the committee on ways and means to replace Jesli Lapus, who was assigned to head the Department of Education. *Michelle V. Remo*

REP. HERMINIO TEVES

Swift Foods hopes to break into $200-M Singapore market

By Christine A. Gaylican

RFM CORP.'S SUBSIDIARY SWIFT Foods Inc. is seeking accreditation to begin exporting poultry products to Singapore, company officials said.

Swift Foods will be exporting for the first time its dressed chicken products to Singapore. It is also shipping its branded products to Japan.

Both countries are still recovering from the Avian flu virus, which affected their limited supply of poultry.

RFM chairman Jose "JoeCon" Concepcion Jr. told the INQUIRER that foreign trading firms preferred the country's poultry products.

The company is hoping to corner a portion of the $200-million market of Singapore.

"We would want to supply Singapore and see to it that we maintain this market share and [trade] side by side with other suppliers like Thailand even when the avian flu crisis is over," Concepcion said in a phone interview.

Concepcion noted that the company's chicken dressing plant in Misamis Oriental is geared for export. At full capacity, the plant can actually produce 100,000 chicken heads per day.

"We could ship not less than 25 metric tons of chicken a day depending on the requirements of our customer," he said.

According to Swift Foods senior vice president Susan Kalalo, accrediting authorities from Singapore will arrive in the country next week to begin their inspection of the company's facilities.

The company is also negotiating to resume its poultry exports to Japan by August.

Other Philippine companies venturing in broiler integration and poultry raising, such as San Miguel Corp., have began exporting their produce to Japan early this month.

In 2004, exports of local companies to Japan reached 14 million kilos, data from the Bureau of Animal Industry showed.

Beating the odds?

NO FREE LUNCH
Cielito F. Habito

DURING A RECENT CIVIL SOCIety assessment of the implementation of the Arroyo Medium Term Philippine Development Plan (MTPDP), the ten-point agenda—captured in the mnemonic "BEAT THE ODDs"—was used as reference to rate the government's performance.

How well has each strategy been addressed so far? Below are my suggested ratings.

Balanced budget. The government is well on the way to keeping its deficit well below the target ceiling of P125 billion for the year. But this is mainly because the 2006 budget has not been passed. Economic managers know that balancing the budget is not an end in itself, as it means limiting its spending on social services and/or investments in further economic growth (e.g., via infrastructure). There needs to be a proper balance between fiscal stability and providing for both urgent and longer term needs of the people and the economy. I'd give the government an A- on this item.

Education for all. Education's share of the budget has dropped continuously since 1997. The announced target pupil-classroom ratio of 100 to 1 reflects the sorry state of public school facilities in the country. That the post of Secretary of Education was allowed to remain vacant for almost a year speaks volumes about the importance (or rather lack of it) given to education by the national leadership. And statistics point to declining school enrollment rates in many provinces of the country, tracing to families' economic difficulties. Whether for effort or outcomes, I'm afraid the government rates an F on this one.

Automation of elections. The Commission on Elections remains mired in the controversy over the anomalous contract for the failed election computerization project that could have automated the 2004 elections. No significant headway is being achieved towards ensuring that the upcoming 2007 elections will be computerized in a way that will inspire public confidence in the integrity of the electoral exercise. Another F rating.

Transport, digital infrastructure. The roll-on-roll-off (Ro-Ro) program of the government has helped improve mobility of products from the countryside and increase freight traffic across the regions. However, fiscal difficulties severely constrain further public investments in infrastructure facilities, notwithstanding the recent SONA promises. First quarter data in fact revealed a decline (negative growth) in the transport sector. Meanwhile, improvements in the digital infrastructure are being put in place primarily by the private sector. I'd give the government a B-here.

Terminating hostilities. The government appears to be pursuing the peace of the graveyard. Current policy is clearly to escalate military action, while a "reign of terror" surrounds the murder of suspected dissidents around the country. But history tells us that the military solution can never yield a lasting solution to the persistent insurgency. Rather than subside, tensions and violent engagements have in fact been escalating lately, as dissidents only get further inflamed and emboldened by the government's renewed militarization of the countryside. Another F rating.

Healing the wounds of Edsa. The current government, itself installed by a peaceful Edsa uprising, is widely perceived to have spurned, and is directly challenging, the lessons of Edsa. Thus, rather than heal the old wounds of Edsa, it is instead bringing up new wounds that exacerbate the divisions among the Filipino people. Clearly another F.

Electricity, water for barangays. Private and community initiatives (like Manila Water's Tubig Para sa Barangay program) have been more instrumental in providing greater access to water for the poor (but for which Malacañang has been quick to claim credit). As progress is more attributable to parties outside of the government, a grade of C is warranted here.

Opportunities for Livelihood, 6-10 million jobs. Actual job generation, according to official labor statistics from the NSO, has been falling far short of the 1 to 1.2 million jobs needed to employ new entrants to the labor force every year. Meanwhile, job quality continues to deteriorate, with the underemployment rate reaching as high as 26 percent, way up from the normal 16-18 percent of past years. Less than half of the new jobs being created are wage and salary jobs; the bulk have been in the form of self-employment (own-account workers) and unpaid family labor. Again, another F.

Decongest Metro Manila. There is little indication so far that Metro Manila is being decongested, other than through piecemeal relocation of squatters. More fundamental interventions like transfer of major facilities outside of Metro Manila have yet to be seen. Metro Manila traffic remains highly congested, and solid waste management systems are still unable to cope with the demands of the metropolis. Still another F.

Develop Clark and Subic. The strategy to focus public investments on Clark and Subic seems premised on the discredited "trickle-down" theory of development. The main visible signs of progress here include the availability of inexpensive but limited flights from Clark to regional destinations like Singapore and Bangkok. We have yet to see a major scale-up in industrial activity in Clark or Subic, pending installation of needed new facilities for telecommunications and transport. Both continue to be hampered by lack of public resources, and lack of interest from private investors in setting up both infrastructure facilities or enterprises. The limited achievements here so far merit only a C-.

Averaging the above assessments, the overall rating on the ten-point agenda falls short, unfortunately, of the minimum passing grade of D—indicating the need for more focus and even more effort on the part of the government.

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu

E-mail: pr_pep@inquirer.com.ph
aespinosa@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Aries Espinosa

Asean Film Festival and exhibit at The Podium

MALLGOERS WILL HAVE THE RARE OPPORtunity to see some of Southeast Asia's most critically acclaimed films in the Asean Film Festival which will be held from Aug. 10 to 13 at the Podium Cinema.

The film festival is in line with the celebration of the 39th anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), and the upcoming assumption of the Philippines' chairmanship to the Asean this August. At the same time, there will be an exhibit on Southeast Asian Art Forms in the Podium's Lounge area.

The event is a joint project of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, the Department of Foreign Affairs, the participating Asean embassies and The Podium, in cooperation with Art Post Asia and Asean Coci.

The films include the silent Filipino film "Maicling Pelicula ng Ysang Indio Nacional"; Thailand's "The Overture"; and Cambodia's "Raja Bori", a film by HRH Prince Samdech Krom Preah Norodom Rannariddh; Singapore's "Singapore Gaga"; Indonesia's "Gie", Malaysia's "Potianak Harum Sandal Malam", Laos' "Lessons In Life", and Brunei's "The Caring King". There are also documentaries from Vietnam in the lineup: "The Hardship of Sand", "The Letters on Sea Waves", "The Trumpet", and "The Ancient Dance".

Set in the 1890s, the Philippines' "Maicling Pelikula..." is directed by Raya Martin with music by Khawn de la Cruz. The film tells the story of a child bell ringer torn between his duties to the Spanish state and to his Filipino heritage; the struggles of a pubescent caught in the growing pressures of the revolution and an actor in a rural community escaping his troubled soul.

Cambodia's "Raja Bori" tells the story of a young boy and girl who grow up in awe of the Angkor Wat, one of Cambodia's most sacred temples. As adults, they are forced to confront the fact that smugglers in search of valuable artifacts are destroying many of the ancient Khmer temples. The film is written, produced, and directed by Prince Samdech Kron Preah Norodom Rannariddh, and celebrates the real culture, tradition, and civilization of Cambodia.

Following gifted musician

Thailand's "Overture" revolves around music as it follows gifted musician Sorn from childhood to old age; from music competitions at village festivals to a defiant act of protest against the suppression of Thai music during the years of the Pacific War.

Directed by Thailand's Itthisoontorn Vichailak, "Overture" is based on the life of Luang Pradit Pairoh, who played the *ra-nad-ek* (Thai saxophone) and who was the most revered music master during the reigns of King Rama V, King Rama VI, and King Rama VII.

"Singapore Gaga", the latest work by award-winning filmmaker Tan Pin Pin, is a whimsical portrait of Singapore through its music and sounds. It features performances of train announcements (Eating and drinking not allowed on the stations and trains"), Madrasah school cheers, and a performance by avante garde toy pianist Margaret Leng Tang, among others. It is a tapestry of montages, songs, and cinema verite vignettes lovingly stitched together.

Indonesia's "Gie" is based on the story of a central yet unknown political activist/writer in the '60s, the darkest era of Indonesian history. His life is a clash between the high drama of political events, and the small world of friendship and romance. He is falling apart when he sees his constant battle for justice and truth give way to another dictatorial regime. As time passes by, the people around him adjust to the new regime, but he continues to fight. His uncompromised idealism drives people away. His friends-and even the woman he loves-reject him. Only the beauty of nature can rescue and free him. "Gie" is directed by Riri Riza.

Laos' "Lessons in Life" tells the tale of a poor teenage girl, Noi, who is convinced by a woman in her community to move to Thailand for a job. After suffering abuse, she escapes with the help of Thai and Laos authorities, and in the end takes a small boat across the Mekong River back to Laos.

Screening schedules are: Aug. 10—"Singapore Gaga" at 9 p.m.; Aug. 11—"Raja Bori", "The Hardship of the Sand", "The Letters on Sea Waves", "The Trumpet", "The Caring Monarch", "Gie", and "Pontianak II". Weekend screenings are: Aug. 12—"The Hardship of Sand", "The Letters on Sea Waves", "The Trumpet", "The Caring Monarch", "The Overture", "Pontianak II", and "Gie"; and Aug. 13—"Raja Bori", "Singapore Gaga", and "The Overture". All screenings begin at 1 p.m. and are open to the public.

HCKI CELEBRATES VEGAS NITE!

A full house of fun recently took over Honda Cars Kalookan Inc (HCKI) as its avid patrons gamely participated in Vegas Nite, an exclusive Customer Care Activity spearheaded by the HCKI team. HCKI surprised its customers with its lavish presentation of the Vegas theme by transforming the showroom into a grand casino complete with casino slot machines, and poker and baccarat tables. More than 200 customers graced the event and were treated to a friendly game of Texas Hold 'em Poker challenge. Using the HCKI Play Money, customers gamely joined the poker challenge for a chance at winning exciting prizes. The grand winner, John Pua, won round trip tickets for two to Boracay, while other lucky participants won Honda premium items. Other prizes up for grabs during the Vegas Nite's fun portion were Jack Daniels caps and watch, sports bags from Winston Cigarettes, Messenger Bags from American Express, keychains and umbrellas from Casino Filipino, Gadgets Magazines, special items from Fitness First courtesy of ABS-CBN, pillows, and gift packs from Alaxan. With its engaging theme, Vegas Nite became a huge success as it provided a venue for HCKI to strengthen its ties with its loyal customers. Shown is the HCKI Play Money used by the players.

RP's international lifestyle trade show slated at World Trade Center

THE COUNTRY'S INTERNATIONAL lifestyle trade show will be staged at the World Trade Center Philippines from Oct. 10 to 12, with many of the world's industry players coming over to join this global event.

Comprising the expo are Beauty & Fitness World 2006 and Spa & Wellness Philippines 2006 which will be staged by Worldexco, one of the Philippines' leading international events organizers.

Now on its third year, Beauty & Fitness World is the country's pioneering and only international tradeshow for the cosmetics, personal care and fitness industry. It will be held back-to-back with the launching of Spa & Wellness Philippines 2006, an expo within an expo, according to Worldexco.

"These two exciting lifestyle expositions are expected to attract more than 100 exhibitors from all over Asia Pacific who are interested in introducing their products and services and are seeking partnerships in the local market," Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace H. Durano states in his endorsement letter to the tourism community.

Worldexco's partner organizations for the twin events are the Hairdressers and Cosmetologists Association of the Philippines (Hacap), the Spa Association of the Philippines Inc (Sapi), and the Philippine Federation of Natural Health, all of which are conducting their own special events within the trade show.

Members of the three industry organizations are at the forefront of today's trend in beauty and wellness, now a major attraction for global travel and tourism.

Tourists from various parts of the world now come to places that offer not only tourism destinations but more so facilities for enhancing their beauty and well being.

This phenomenon has prompted the Department of Tourism to promote the Philippines as a wellness destination to the 20 million Japanese outbound market, to whom the native hilot is fast becoming popular.

Market trends also indicate a whopping 25-percent growth rate for beauty and fitness products annually, with herbal personal care and "cosmeceuticals" alone registering $2 million in export sales.

Still, the Philippines itself is a huge market for the global beauty and wellness industry as 86 percent of the 84 million Filipinos fall within its target age segment of 44 below.

"The recent emergence of the metrosexual Filipino male contributes significantly to this dynamically growing market," said Worldexco general manager Raquel Romero in referring to those spending more on acquiring good health and good looks.

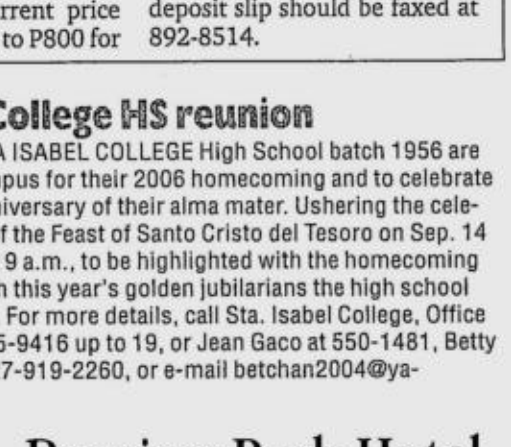
"Moreover, the Philippines continues to be one of Asia's fastest-growing markets for beauty, wellness and fitness products and services with an annual average growth rate of 25 percent," Romero added.

Catering to the fashion-conscious Filipinos nationwide are over 50,000 beauty-related establishments, including beauty salons, health and wellness spas, fitness gyms, face and body enhancement clinics, beauty boutiques, as well as manufacturers, distributors and traders.

Featuring a local and international showcase of beauty-related products and services, the three-day expo includes professional seminars for trade practitioners and onsite demonstrations of the latest trends and techniques available in this lucrative market today.

More information can be obtained from Worldexco at 855-8342 to 45, or e-mail info@worldexco.com.

FAME celebrates 4th year



THE FRIENDLY ALliances and Media Expressions (FAME) Inc, publisher of Health & Lifestyle magazine, will celebrate its 4th anniversary come September 2006.

In line with the company's anniversary celebration, FAME Inc is offering a big discount on the subscription price of Health and Lifestyle magazine on a limited period now ongoing until Oct. 30, 2006.

Metro Manila subscribers can avail themselves the one year subscription of the magazine for only P600 from its original price of P1,000, while the six-month subscription which costs P600 will be lowered to P400. For provincial subscribers, the current price of P1,300 is slashed to P800 for an annual subscription, while a six-month subscription is at P500.

Interested parties may call Rudy Resurreccion at 892-0723 to 24. Subscription can be directed via cheque or cash to FAME Inc at any BPI Bank branches with savings account number 0093-1826-69. The deposit slip should be faxed at 892-8514.

Santa Isabel College HS reunion

ALL ALUMNI OF SANTA ISABEL COLLEGE High School batch 1956 are invited to return to campus for their 2006 homecoming and to celebrate the 375th founding anniversary of their alma mater. Ushering the celebration is the holding of the Feast of Santo Cristo del Tesoro on Sep. 14 with an alumni Mass at 9 a.m., to be highlighted with the homecoming reunion on Sep. 17 with this year's golden jubilarians the high school graduates of batch '56. For more details, call Sta. Isabel College, Office of Alumni Affairs at 525-9416 up to 19, or Jean Gaco at 550-1481, Betty Chan at 455-8573, 0927-919-2260, or e-mail betchan2004@yahoo.com.

RP TOPS 5TH PHILIPPINE INTERNATIONAL BILLFISH TOURNAMENT

The title drought ended for Philippine anglers at the 5th Philippine International Billfish Tournament (PIBT) at the nation's sailfish capital in San Vicente, Cagayan Province. The tandem of Rico Gueco of Philippine Airlines and Tony Espejo of Standard Insurance finally wrested the title away from visiting anglers in a down-the-wire finish after four years of fruitless campaigning with foreigners from Hong Kong and Taiwan. 31 anglers from 4 countries-Taiwan, Australia, the United States and the Philippines, congregated at the plush fishing campsite of the Philippine Game Fishing Foundation at the Don Andres Soriano Memorial Fishing Camp and feasted on delicious meals catered by the Triple V Group from May 26 to 31. Rounding up the winners on the 5th PIBT were: Rico Gueco and Tony Espejo (champions); Chuang, Chi-Ming and Lin, Hsien-Neng (1st runner up), and Frank Kuan and Chang, Chen-Chien (2nd runner up). Meanwhile, the Triple V 49th National Sportfishing Tournament winners are Rico Gueco and Tony Espejo (champions); Edwin Guzman (1st runner up), and Bobby Garcia and Mar Tayag (2nd runner up). For more information on the tournament, call Jie Q. Combalicer, Philippine Game Fishing Foundation, at 400-7777 loc. 130.

PCTO, Itesap endorse Commworld 2006

THE PHILIPPINE CHAMBER OF TELECOMMUnication Operators Inc (PCTO), with its members Bayantel, Capitol Wireless Inc, Digitel, Express Telecom, Eastern Telecom Philippines Inc, Globe Telecom, Islacom, Philippine Global Communications Inc, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company, Philippine Telegraph & Telephone Corp, Paptelco, Pilipino Telephone Corp, Smart Communications Inc and Telecommunications Technologies Philippines Inc, has thrown its support at Commworld '06 to be held from Aug. 9 to 12 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. It is also being supported by the Integrated Telecommunication Suppliers Association of the Philippines (Itesap) and will once again serve as the platform for industry leaders to promote, discuss and invite both local and foreign investors to enter the fast expanding Philippine ICT market. Commworld '06 is being organized by Global-Link Marketing & Management Services Inc (GMM). For more information, call Jing Lagandaon at 750-8588/887-1304, fax 750-8585 or e-mail jing.lagandaon@globallinkph.com.

ProductFiles

Color it black

THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING portable music system that changed the way people listen to music just got better. Once available only in white, audio enthusiasts will be thrilled to see the Bose Sound Dock in a different color hue, glossy black.

Launched early this year, the Bose SoundDock Black edition is the same powered acoustic package with an all new skin. It has a credit card-size remote control which enables you to control the system from across the room. A docking cradle for the iPod allows you to enjoy your music while conveniently charging your iPod without the cables or adaptors. Simply insert the iPod into the cradle and experience clear, crisp and undistorted sound of Bose audio technology even at high volumes. The SoundDock system's sleek appearance blends with the iPod and almost any décor. Its slim profile and small footprint allow placement in kitchens, bedrooms, offices, dorm rooms and even at the beach while having fun in the sun.

The SoundDock is the only system in the market with the patented Active Electronic Equalization and Digital Signal Processor that balances and maintains the output of frequencies, therefore providing a natural balance and clarity throughout the audio spectrum.

"The SoundDock system enhances the performance of both the iPod and the Nano iPod. Music lovers will surely be impressed by the quality of sound provided by such a small package," states Wilson So, president and GM of Eleksis Marketing Corp, exclusive distributors of Bose entertainment systems.

The new Sound Dock Black edition is available in audio and appliance centers nationwide. For inquiries on how to experience a new level of Digital music, call 724-9566/898-2048 or log on to www.eleksis.com and visit Bose showrooms at the SM Megamall, PowerPlant Mall in Rockwell Center, SM Robinsons, Ermita, 3rd floor of Glorietta 3, Ayala Center, Makati, Alabang Town Center and soon to open at the SM Mall of Asia.

Bayview Park Hotel plans your wedding

BAYVIEW PARK HOTEL'S "SATURDAY IS WEDding Planning Day" is still capturing the bridal market by storm. Soon-to-be-wed couples are encouraged to join the bandwagon and visit Bayview every Saturday and have that detailed discussion with top-caliber wedding suppliers, coordinators and premier designers to assist and plan your wedding. It's open from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m., with free admission.

Participating suppliers are Peach Petals plus Parties, Pegz Party Shop, Diocris VideoArt & Photography, Pasteleria Espanola, Streetline Rent-a-Car, Cakes by Carla, Regent Travel Corp, My Wedding Network.Com, Kasal.com, The Wedding Library, DAS Sounds & Lights, and Bankard Pa-Easy-Plans.

On Sep. 2, a grandiose fashion show will be unveiled. Dubbed "Fantasy Wedding", creations of elegant gowns by Joel Pros and Boying Eustaquio will be showcased. This event is also free to the public.

For any inquiries and information, call 526-1555 or 526-1538, or e-mail banquet@bayviewparkhotel.com.

Bayview is located at 1118 Roxas Boulevard corner UN Avenue, Manila (fronting the US Embassy).

Festival Supermall fairs

WATCH OUT FOR THE UNRAVELING of the latest sophisticated gadgets and high-tech accessories from different electronics and computer shops during the Home and Techno Fair 2006 at the Festival Supermall in Filinvest, Alabang from Aug. 8 to 22. Home display setups of various furniture stores will be showcased at the 2nd level main entrance and at the 3rd level Chef's Avenue. There will be a 50-percent discount on selected items mall-wide. Call 850-3514 for more inquiries.

PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City

is now accepting application for
Academic Year 2007

FELLOWSHIPS:

I. Pediatric Cardiovascular Medicine Department
- 3 years Residency in General Pediatric accredited by PPS
- at least passed written examination for Diplomate in Pediatrics

II. CV Anesthesiology Division
- 3 years Residency in General Anesthesia accredited by PBA (Board eligible)

III. Thoracic and Cardiovascular Surgery Division
- 3 years Residency in General Surgery accredited by PCS (Board eligible)

RESIDENCES: (For Medical Board Passers)

I. CV Radiological Sciences Division
II. Biological and Clinical Laboratory Division
III. Nuclear Medicine Division
- 1 year Fellowship Program is available for the above Residencies

General Requirements:
1. Medical Diploma
2. Transcript of Records with the General Weighted Average
3. Itemized Board Rating
4. Three (3) Letters of Recommendation (with at least one letter written by the Training Officer &/or Director of the previous Training Programs (duplicate letters or photocopies signed by different Doctors will not be accepted)
5. Four (4) pcs. 2"x2" picture colored
6. Certificate of Residency

- Deadline for submission of application is on August 31, 2006
- Academic Year 2006 starts on January 1, 2007

Please address your communications to:
ARISTIDES G. PANLILIO, M.D.
Department Manager
Department of Education, Training and Research
Philippine Heart Center
East Avenue, Quezon City

For further inquiries, please contact Ms. Carmela M. Ocasion or Ms Cleopatra Q. Palencia with Tel. Nos. 925-2401 locals 3234, 3235, 3236, 3237 and Telefax 926-9622, or you can email to oer@phc.gov.ph

(PDI July 16 22 23 29 30 Aug 6 7 13 14 20 21 27 & 28 2006)

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
GUAGUA, PAMPANGA

August 4, 2006

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF BIDDERS

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) WITH OFFICE ADDRESS AT SAN ROQUE, GUAGUA, PAMPANGA IS INVITING ELIGIBLE BIDDERS FOR THE SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF THE FOLLOWING PACKAGES:

Package 1:
A. Supply, Delivery and Construction of Single Phase Distribution Line at Balas, Bacolor, Pampanga as per Staking/ Requirement of Engineering Department of this office.

Package 2: (Supply and Delivery)
A. Read and Bill Equipment (Electronic) with Thermal Printer — 50 units
Note: Thermal Paper Size – 3 inches

Package 3: (Supply and Delivery)
A. Computer Set — 30 units
a. CPU's Specification
3.0 Ghz, 512 Mb Memory, 40Gb Hard Disk 72 rpm
Video Card, Lan Card, CD-RW Drive
b. Monitor 17" with keyboard & mouse
c. Windows XP Professional License
B. UPS - (Un-interrupted Power Supply) Max. 10 minutes — 30 units

You are therefore invited for the pre-bid conference on August 9, 2006 (Wednesday) 10:00 A.M. at PELCO II Board Room San Roque, Guagua, Pampanga wherein there will be a technical and financial orientation and discussion in the preparation for the bidding proper scheduled on August 10, 2006 (Thursday) at 10:00 a.m.

Please be informed that non-attendance on the scheduled pre-bid conference is an outright disqualification for those bidders who would want to join the bidding.

All bidders are required to secure bidding documents on the scheduled pre-bid conference with the amount to be determined based on confirmed number of bidders.

All bidders are required to be accredited with this office with an accreditation fee (non-refundable) of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00). In addition to accreditation fee, all bidders are required to submit the following documents:

1. Company's Profile
2. Latest ITR
3. Audited Financial Statement
4. Business or Mayor's Permit
5. DTI Registration
6. SEC Registration

For more information please see/ contact Engr. Raul L. Canlas at PELCO II Office or dial number at (045) 900-2650.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. RAUL L. CANLAS**
PBAC Chairperson

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **MR. SULPICIO C. LAGARDE JR.**
General Manager

(PDI--Aug. 6 & 7, 2006)

TransCo
National Transmission Corporation
Republic of the Philippines

Section I. Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF
JET A-1 AVIATION FUEL (for One Year)
Ref. No. PB060329-PP0047 (PB2)

1. The *NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION, Head Office Region (TRANSCO-HO) through the 2006 Corporate Budget approved by the TransCo Board* intends to apply the sum of **Php16,360,313.90** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *PR No. ATO-06-000016256.* Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The *TRANSCO-HO* now invites Bids from eligible Bidders *for the supply and delivery of Jet A-1 fuel.* Delivery of the GOODS is required as follows: ***Into-plane Deliveries: within 24 hours from receipt of notice from TransCo; Drum Deliveries: within five (5) calendar days from receipt of notice from TransCo.*** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorship, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from ***August 08, 2006 to September 04, 2006*** at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of ***Php 2,000.00***. The method of payment will be *Cash*. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
5. The *TRANSCO-HO* will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 21, 2006 / 2:00 PM at the address below. Requests for clarifications on the bid documents should be submitted before the Pre-bid Conference.***
6. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before ***September 05, 2006/10:00 A.M.*** All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in any of the following forms and amount or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

FORM OF SECURITY	AMOUNT
1. Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit (1% of ABC)	Php 163,603.14
2. Bank Guarantee (1.5% of ABC)	Php 245,404.71
3. Surety Bond (2.5% of ABC)	Php 409,007.85
4. Foreign Government Guarantee (100% of ABC)	Php 16,360,313.90

7. Bid opening shall be on ***September 05, 2006/10:00 A.M.*** at the ***Admin. Conference Room same address below.*** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the address below
8. The *National Transmission Corporation* reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region
Mr. Armando N. Ochoa, BAC Chairman
MMD Office, Ground Floor, TransCo Main Bldg.
Power Center, Quezon Avenue corner BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. No. (632) 981-2207 / Fax No. (632) 922-8432
Website: www.transco.ph

(Sgd.) ARMANDO N. OCHOA
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee-I

(PDI–August 7, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Regional Office 6 – Iloilo City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
GRAINS TRUCKING SERVICES FOR NFA ILOILO – REGION 6

Trucking Services of 105,000 Bags IMR Stocks from Jaro Triplex / Kabsaka Warehouse at Iloilo City to Bacolod City Warehouses (Door-to-Door) thru RORO.

The ***NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY, Region 6***, through its Corporate Budget for 2006 intends to apply the sum of ***Two Million Eight Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P2,887,500.00)*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Supply of Trucking/Hauling Services for the transfer of Imported Rice in Iloilo City, Region 6 with Project Reference No. RO6-2006-07. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The ***National Food Authority*** now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for Grains Trucking Services of NFA Iloilo, Region 6. Delivery of GOODS is required upon receipt of Notice to Proceed until December 31, 2006 or upon completion of the trucking services for a total of 105,000 bags, more or less, whichever is applicable. The grains trucking services comprise the following:

Lot	Warehouse	Quantity 50 kg-bag	Minimum # of Trucks	Approved Budget for the Contract
1	From Jaro Triplex/ Kabsaka Warehouse at Jaro, Iloilo City to Bacolod City Warehouses	105,000	Six (6)	P 2,887,500.00

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened.

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY and inspect the Bidding Documents at the NFA Regional Office 6, Jaro, Iloilo City starting ***July 31 – August 10, 2006*** from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of ***Three Thousand Pesos (P3,000.00)***. The mode of payment shall be in cash. Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The ***National Food Authority*** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on ***August 11, 2006 @ 9:00 AM*** at the Conference Room, 2/F, Iloilo Regional Office, Jaro, Iloilo City.

Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered during Bid opening on ***August 23, 2006 not later than 9:30 AM*** at the Conference Room, 2/F, Iloilo Regional Office, Jaro, Iloilo City. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in accordance with the following schedule and form:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of the ABC to be Bid
Cash, cashier's/manager's check payable to NFA	One Percent (1%)
Surety bond issued by GSIS marked "callable on demand"	Two and a Half Percent (2.5%)

Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The ***National Food Authority*** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA
Quintin Salas, Jaro, Iloilo City
Tel. Nos. (033) 3292165 / 3206246
Fax No. (033) 3204764

(Sgd.) VILMA H. ZARRAGA, MNSA
BAC Chairperson/ARD
(PDI – July 31 & August 7, 2006)

NEECO II
AREA 2

NUEVA ECIJA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. – Area 2
Maharlika Highway, Brgy. Diversion
San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Tel./Fax : 044-486-3668

The Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. - Area 2 (NEECO II–Area 2) now invites Sealed Bids from eligible bidders to bid for assorted scrap (iron/steel), unserviceable electrical equipment / devices. unserviceable automotive parts / devices, unserviceable computer accessories and other scrap materials/equipment with floor price in the amount of **ONE MILLION THREE HUNDRED FIVE THOUSAND ONE HUNDRED SIXTY TWO AND 50/100 (P1,305,162.50) PESOS.**

Pre-Bid Conference and inspection of scrap materials will be conducted at the NEECO II – Area 2 Main Office at Maharlika Highway, Diversion, San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija on August 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. Bidding proper will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Non-refundable registration fee is **TWO THOUSAND (P2,000.00) PESOS.**

THE NEECO II–Area 2 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informalities therein and accept any bid or offer which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to NEECO II–Area 2.

(Sgd.) ENGR. CLARENCE M. PAREDES
PBAC Chairman
Cell No. 0917-985-8937

Noted by:
(Sgd.) MR. RAMON M. DE VERA
General Manager

(PDI – August 6 & 7, 2006)

NUEVA ECIJA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. – Area 2
Maharlika Highway, Diversion,
San Leonardo, Nueva Ecija
Tel. / Fax : 044-486-3668

NEECO II
Area 2

August 2, 2006

The Nueva Ecija II Electric Cooperative, Inc. – Area 2 is inviting you to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply of labor and materials for the following:

LOCATION	XFORMER	1PHASE	OS (KM)	UB (KM)
1. Las Piñas, Penaranda	1-15kVA	0.558	0.305	0.258
2. Bagong Sibol, Mambangnan, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.362	0.392	0.302
3. San Anton, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.040	0.390	-------
4. Castellano, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.210	0.320	0.180
5. Bilarang Hipon, Gulod, Gen. Tinio	1-15kVA	-------	0.280	-------
6. Ofelia Subd. Padolina, Gen. Tinio	1-15kVA	0.210	0.140	-------
7. Tumana 1, Magpapalayok, San Leonardo	1-15kVA	0.490	0.135	0.120
8. Sitio Tibag, Mambangnan, San Leonardo	1-10kVA	-------	0.400	-------

Deadline for the submission of company profile will be simultaneous with the Pre-Bid Conference on August 15, 2006 at exactly 10:00 AM at the Conference Room of NEECO II Area 2. Bidding proper will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference. Non-refundable Registration Fee is P 1,000.00.

NEECO II Area 2 reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive defects or informality therein, or accept any bid or offer which it may consider to be advantageous and beneficial to NEECO II Area 2.

(Sgd.) **ENGR. CLARENCE M. PAREDES**
PBAC Chairman
Cell No. 0917 985 8937

Noted by:
(Sgd.) **MR. RAMON M. DE VERA**
General Manager

(PDI--Aug. 6 & 7, 2006)

JOBCOMPACT Check out more jobs from Jobmarket Compact every Wednesday. *Inquirer Compact available in all key cities in Luzon.* JOB

People, Events & Products

Convenience at your neighborhood 7-Eleven

A BOTTLE OF TOYO, HOWEVER INSIGNIFIcant it seems, means a lot for someone trying to perfect adobo with mealtime looming. And when the household's stock runs out, the next-door neighbor is the most convenient place to run to. In the case of condo dwellers, office workers, even call center agents in the business districts, malls and supermarkets are located several blocks away, it's a good thing another "neighbor's" place is always open 24 hours a day and seven days a week—a door with the address of 7-11.

7-Eleven has become the trusted convenience store for generations, its stores located practically on every street corner servicing the needs of the community. Its pioneering vision to open stores around the clock has established it into a popular company and brand across the globe.

Philippine Seven Corp, the country licensee of the world-renowned convenience store chain 7-Eleven, adheres to the worldwide vision of its mother company to be "the customer preferred store by exceeding customer expectations through quality, speed, selection, and value in a safe and pleasant environment."

7-Eleven offers time-conscious customers a full range of products and services that meet their ever-changing daily needs.

7-Eleven pioneered the convenience store concept way back in 1927 at the Southland Ice Company in Dallas, Texas. In addition to selling blocks of ice to refrigerate food, an enterprising ice dock employee began offering milk, bread and eggs on Sundays and evenings when grocery stores were closed. This new business idea increased sales, and convenience retailing was born.

The company's first convenience outlets were known as Tote'm stores since customers "toted" away their purchases, and some even sported genuine Alaskan totem poles in front. In 1946, Tote'm became 7-Eleven to reflect the stores' new, "extended" hours-7 a.m. until 11 p.m., seven days a week. The company's corporate name was changed from The Southland Corp to 7-Eleven Inc in 1999.

7-Eleven's move to stay open 24 hours started by accident in 1962, at a store in Austin, Texas. The store was located very close to the university campus, and one Saturday night after a football game, the store was so busy that it never closed. Eventually, the manager opened the store 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Soon afterwards, 7-Eleven opened 24-hour stores in Dallas, Fort Worth and Las Vegas, and those hours were adopted company-wide.

The undisputed leader in convenience retailing, 7-Eleven has more than 31,000 stores operating in the United States and 19 other countries.

In Manila, 7-Eleven is known for its innovative fresh food line; authentic Filipino microwaveable rice meals, hotdog and siopao, also. Continuously, the company's highly successful fresh food line is continually being reviewed, developed and expanded as it is a rapidly growing segment. About 70 percent of 7-Eleven customers visit the store looking for a quick snack.

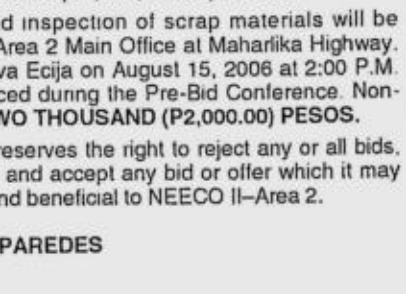
7-Eleven is also open to franchising.

As Philippine Seven Corp turns 25 next year, the store chain retains the business cornerstone which has made it so successful internationally from 1927 until today: 24-hour convenience, seven days a week-the 7-Eleven store never closes its door to any neighbor.

For inquiries, call 726-9968, 0920-9508651 or visit www.7-eleven.com.ph.

ProductFILES

Wellsen's instant hair color

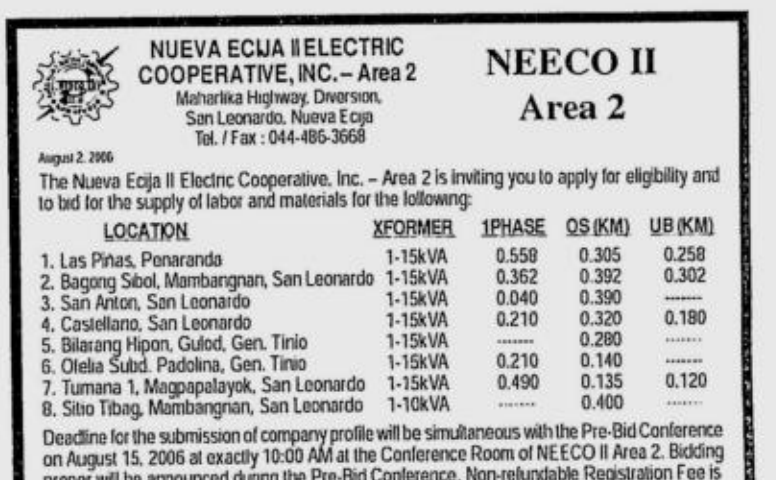


FINALLY, INSTANT, VIVID AND VIBRANT hair color in as fast as 2 minutes. Experience it without ever compromising the well-being of your hair. Revive and enhance your hair color with the first organic hair color shampoo and conditioner in the market-Wellsen Glowing Treatment Color Shampoo and Wellsen Glowing Treatment Color Rescue.

Manufactured by L&S Cosmetics & Toiletries in Malaysia, Wellsen is a revolutionary hair color shampoo and conditioner that adds color while it cleans, and gives amazing highlights while it conditions. It's safe to use frequently, is skin and scalp-friendly, with a pleasant smell and low staining factor at a value-for-money price. With popular, up-to-date and fascinating shade selections to capture every mood, you can mix and match colors to reveal the more creative you. Now, you can change the color of your hair anytime you want it!

Get it in 10 ml sachets or 100 ml bottles. It's available at Watsons, SM Department Stores, SM Supermarkets and Shopwise Supermarkets nationwide.

For product inquiries, call 636-1166.



PHINMA PROPERTY FETED BY SUPERBRANDS

PHINMA Property Holdings Corp (PPHC) has recently been recognized as a Superbrand by Superbrand Philippines Awards for 2006, making it now part of a global list of companies that have been identified to be performing above and beyond others within their respective market category. UK-based international awarding body Superbrand, with programs in over 57 countries, identifies and pays tribute to exceptional brands by recognizing, rewarding, and reinforcing leading brands from all over the world. Now bannered by the slogan 'City Living Made Easy', PPHC is the leader in affordable medium rise housing in the country. Shown receiving the Superbrands certificate of award for PPHC from lawyer Pete Mendoza, OIC, consumers welfare trade regulations group (left) and Karl McLean, chair, Superbrand Marketing International Inc (right) president and CEO Willie J. Uy (2nd from left) and AVP for marketing and design Grant Orbeta (2nd from right).

MEDICAL MISSION IN CALOOCAN

The NCR Command under Lt. Gen. Allan Cabalquinto tapped the services of the Quezon City Lions and elements of the 131st Army Reserve Division under Col. Virgillio Aganon PA (Res) and multiservice reservists under Col. Jesus G. Cabarrus PAF (Res) to conduct a medical, dental, surgical, optometric, deworming, milkfeeding and nutrition product distribution including toys for children at Barangay Camarin, Caloocan City. Over 2,700 patients were treated. Shown is Col. JG Cabarrus PAF (Res) distributing deworming medicine to children.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

VANGIE PARAGAT WILTON PARAGAT

This is to inform all concerned that a Warrant of Arrest was issued on May 16, 2006 by the Hon. Judge Amelia A. Fabros of the Pasig Regional Trial Court Branch 160 againts spouses **VIRGILIA P. PARAGAT** a.k.a **"VANGIE"** and **WILTON PARAGAT,** both of whom have been charged with the crime of **ESTAFA,** docketed as Criminal Case No.129140.

Kindly convey any information on their present whereabouts to Mobile # 0919-6289920. A reward will be given to any person who will provide information that will lead to the arrest of the two accused. All information given shall be treated confidentially.

(PDI-August 7, 2006)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

PNOC

Merrit Road, Fort Bonifacio, 1200 Taguig City, Philippines
P.O. Box 2102 MCPO, Tel. Nos. 893-6001 to 47/893-1320 Fax No. 840-1575

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

SUPPLY, FABRICATION, DELIVERY & INSTALLATION OF 2 UNITS SEMI-ELLIPSOIDAL HEAD & UPPER SEPARATOR VESSEL SHELL W/ WEAR RESISTANCE STEEL PLATE LINING
EDC 06-086-1

The Approved Budget is P4,765,935.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is 90 calendar days.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o R.A. Sison) starting **August 7, 2006** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: Five Hundred (P500.00).

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **August 17, 2006, 10:00 a.m.** at the Admin Conf. Rm. of PNOC-EDC's So. Negros Geoth. Production Field, Puhagan, Valencia, Negros Or.. Site inspection will follow thereafter.

Applications for Eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on September 6, 2006** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--August 7, 2006)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM

Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM invites all interested parties to submit sealed proposals for the sale of One (1) Lot Scrap metals, obsolete computers and printers, unserviceable typewriters & fax machines and other scrap materials located at the GSIS Pasay City on 'AS IS , WHERE IS" basis to be conducted on August 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at the Physical Resources Lounge, Level I. Core B, New GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Pasay City.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MIN. BID
1. One (1) lot	Scrap metal consisting of unserviceable CCTV cameras, telemitter, digital central receivers, racks, printers, consoles, keyboard, batteries, transformers, fuses, printers, monitors, ADT panel boxes, smoke detectors, generator starter, spotlights, roll up doors, steel cabinets, pellets container, exhaust shutter, rolling doors, insulators, incandescent bulbs, ballasts, fluorescent lamps, AHU, condensing units, steel box, UPS switch, rectifier cell, CCTV CPU, window type aircon, disk cartridge, magnetic reel, ADT surveillance controller, metal cabinets, fixtures, cabinets, oil filter, halogen, tracklight, roll up doors and condensing unit, staplers, perforators, electric fans, blinds, dilapidated furnitures and other scrap metals estimated at 20,000 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 213,200.00
2. One (1) lot	Obsolete / unserviceable computer equipment estimated at 2,193 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 23,377.38 or 10.66/kl
3. One (1) lot	Unserviceable 55 typewriters and 33 fax machines estimated at 990 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,900.00 or 10.00/kl
4. 28 Pcs.	Used Tires	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,100.00 or 325.00/pc

The above obsolete/unserviceable equipment and other scrap materials may be inspected at the New GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City during office hours. For official Bid Forms and further inquiries, please refer to the Materials Management Department, GSIS, Financial Center, Pasay City at Tel No. 891-6295.

Sealed Bids shall be accompanied by a refundable cash bid securities equivalent to 10% of the total amount of bid. Manager', cashier's or certified checks shall be accepted as cash.

The GSIS/PRDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defect/s or informality of the bids received, to accept the bid most advantageous to the System and does not guarantee that an award will be made. The decision of the GSIS/PRDC in this regard shall be final and binding.

(SGD) ARNALDO C. CUASAY
Senior Vice-President
Administration Group

(PDI-August 6, 7 & 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Science and Technology
FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
College, Laguna

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The FOREST PRODUCTS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (FPRDI), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/ manufacturers/ distributors and contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the supply and delivery of the following Laboratory & Office Equipment:

	ITEMS	APPROVED BUDGET
1 unit	Hygrometer/Thermometer Recorder	Php 88,000.00
1 unit	Manual Sample Punch for Stiffness-Tester 38 x 75mm	Php 107,000.00
1 unit	Sample Cutter 430 mm	Php 78,000.00
2 units	Laboratory Fumehood 59" @ Php 75,750/unit	Php 151,500.00
1 unit	Analytical Balance with 220g range and Sensitivity of +-0.0001 g.	Php 189,500.00
1 unit	Elrepho – Brightness, Opacity and Color Tester	Php 2,100,000.00
1 unit	Software for Tensile-Tester	Php 115,000.00
1 unit	Plain Paper Copier	Php 95,000.00
4 units	Air Conditioner 2Hp, Manual	Php 80,000.00

Location - Los Baños, Laguna

Total Approved Budget for the Contract - Php 3,004,000.00

Bid documents will be available to prospective bidders for issuance on **Aug. 7-22. 2006** at the office of the BAC Secretariat, FPRDI, College, Laguna upon payment of a non-refundable amount of One Thousand Pesos (Php 1,000.00).

FPRDI reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all the bids at any time prior to the contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) **MIGUEL C. HERRERA**
BAC, Chairman

(PDI–August 7 & 14, 2006)

METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT
Republic of the Philippines

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply, Installation & Commissioning one (1) unit Water Meter Test Bench

1. The **METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT**, through the 2006 Corporate Budget by the MCWD Board intends to apply the sum of ***Php2,395,500.00*** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for ***PR No. 15453 Supply, Installation & Commissioning of one (1) unit Water Meter Test Bench.*** Bid received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for ***Supply, Installation & Commissioning of one (1) unit Water Meter Test Bench.*** Delivery of the GOODS is required ***within 120 days from the receipt of the approved Purchase Order/Contract.*** The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below from August 08-18, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and upon payment of nonrefundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00. The method of payment will be *Cash.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on August 21, 2006 at the address below.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 5:00 p.m. of August 31, 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by ***Cash bid security*** 1% of ABC or an equivalent amount of Php23,955.00. Late Bids shall not be accepted
8. Bid opening shall be on September 04, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the MCWD Boardroom same address below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below
9. The METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

METRO COTABATO WATER DISTRICT
Mr. Manuel D. Magdael, BAC Chairman
Governor Gutierrez Avenue, Cotabato City
Tel. No. (064) 421-1070 / 421-3566
Fax No. (064) 421-3009

(Sgd) MANUEL D. MAGDAEL
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–July 31 & Aug. 7, 2006)

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Training credits for realty professionals

REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS, including realty consultants, brokers and others licensed by the Department of Trade and Industry – Bureau of Trade Regulations and Consumer Protection will earn credits to meet their required Real Estate Continuing Education Program, when they attend the 11th Annual National Convention and Trade Exhibits of the National Real Estate Association (NREA).

The event is slated on August 24-26, 2006 at Megatrade Hall 3, 5th Level of Building B, SM Megamall, EDSA, Mandaluyong City. It aims to promote modern innovations, cutting-edge technologies, expert and in-depth papers by excellent speakers and some of the latest products and services in the real estate, construction and housing industries.

Alejandro S. Mañalac, NREA executive vice president; and overall convention chairman, said workshop presentations during the second and third days of the convention would focus on topics of significance to real estate professionals.

Among topics to be discussed are: "What Makes a Community Great?," by Architect Nestor S. Mangio, president of Central Country Estate; "Tax-Credit Trend," by BIR Director-Lawyer Nelson M. Aspe; & "Pag-IBIG Financing Program: Success Stories;" by Atty. Romero F.S. Quimbo, president of Home Development Mutual Fund."

Vice Pres. Noli "Kabayan" de Castro, concurrent chairman of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council will be the convention keynote speaker as well as guest of honor to open the trade exhibits.

Interested parties may call the NREA Convention Secretariat at tels. 913-4463 or 912-3492, or send e-mail at nrea_org@yahoo.com or drop by at NREA, at Suite 16, Maya Bldg., 678 EDSA, Cubao, Quezon City.

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Republic of the Philippines
National Electrification Administration
Needed Immediately
GENERAL MANAGER
for
SULU ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (SULECO)
Jolo, Sulu

Qualifications:

- 30-50 YEARS OLD
- Male or Female
- Graduate of Business Administration, Engineering (Electrical, Mechanical, ECE), Accounting, Finance, Management or Behavioral Science
- With Master's Degree or Post-Graduate Degree preferred
- Must have at least five (5) years managerial experience in a utility-related business enterprise
- Computer literate
- Must be willing to relocate with his/her family in Jolo, Sulu

Starting Salary: P25,000.00

Application forms and additional information may be obtained from the Institutional Development Department, 6th Floor, NEA Building, NIA Road, Diliman, Quezon City. Deadline for submission of application form is on 15 August 2006.

(Sgd.) EDITA S. BUENO
Administrator

OBITUARIES

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INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

1. Copy of Death Certificate
2. Any identification document (I.D.)

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS
and bank-to-bank payments

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY
REQUIEMS

THE AUGUSTINIAN SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CONSOLATION

requests you to recommend to God in your prayers and sacrifices the soul of our dear

SISTER FRANCISCA PIS-AN MONTESA, OSA

who passed away on August 5, 2006 at the age of 71.

MAY SHE REST IN PEACE

Funeral Mass will be on August 9, 2006 after 8:30 a.m. Mass at the La Consolacion Convent Chapel, 273 Santolan Road, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Interment will follow at the La Loma Cemetery immediately after the Mass.

"Even when I walk through a dark valley, I feel no harm. For you are at my side, your rod and staff give me courage..."
Psalm 23:4

Message of Thanks

On behalf of the Children, In-laws, Grandchildren & Great Grandchildren of:

DOLORES de Vera PONCE

(January 8, 1936 – July 28, 2006)

President – OSCA Pasay City

We wish to thank all those who have shared their Condolences and Prayers.

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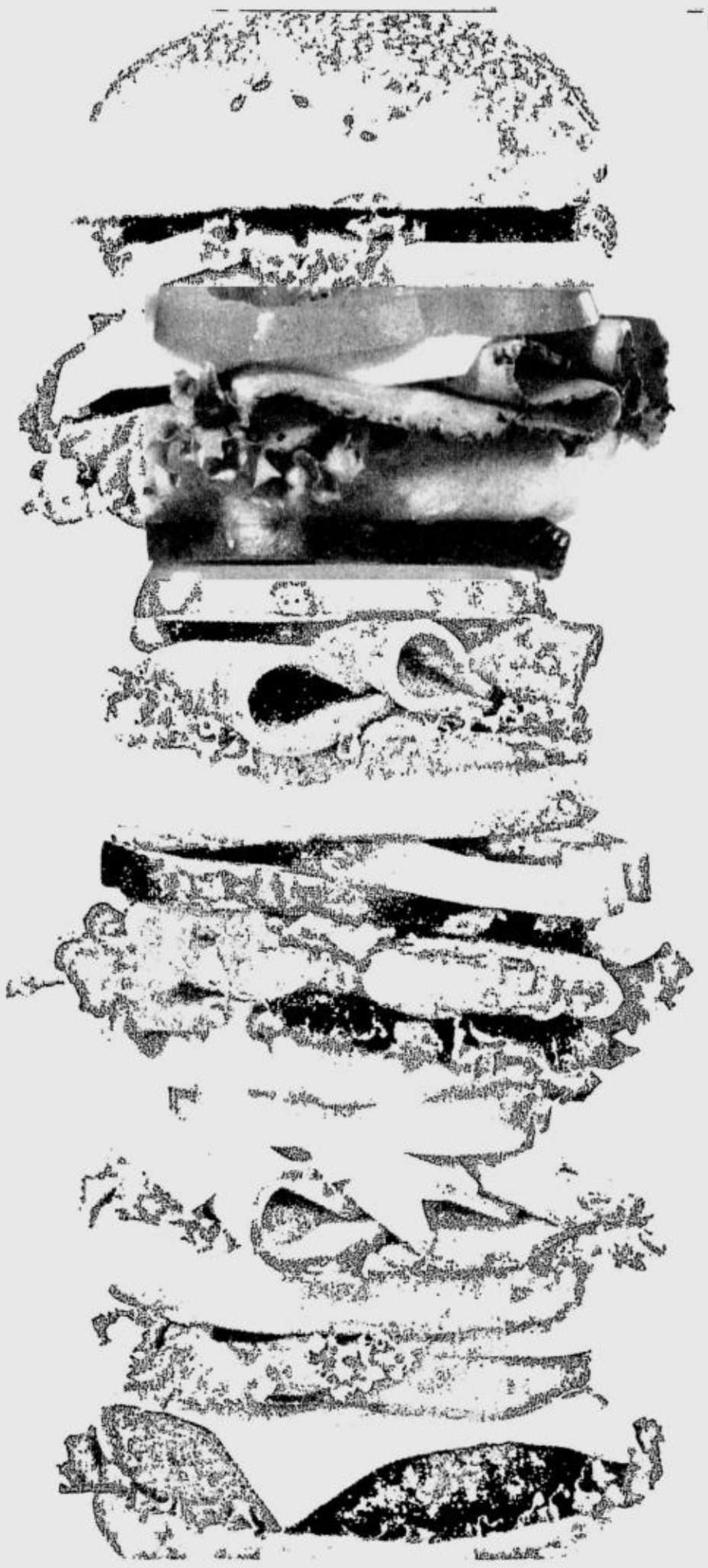

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Banks seen capturing more OFW remittances

Share to hit 11% in '06

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS EXpects an increase this year in the banking system's share of remittances sent by overseas Filipino workers from 10 percent to 11 percent.

In a report presented last week to the government's Cabinet-level Development Budget Coordination Committee, the BSP said it was more bullish on the influx of OFW remittances sent through banks despite the projected moderate 6.5 percent growth in global remittances.

Explaining the upgraded forecast, BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said on Friday: "For the first six months, we've had 15 percent (growth) and at the same time, we continue to see the improving efforts by the banks to capture these remittances."

"Secondly, we continue to see an improvement in the profile of workers in favor of more professionals, more highly skilled workers," he added.

The upgraded growth forecast, however, was small compared to the 25-percent increase in OFW inflows in 2005, when remittances hit a record high of $10.7 billion.

"We recognize that 2005 was high and growth in remittances may taper off. We'll still see growth (in the years ahead), but this won't be as high as what we've seen in early 2000," BSP director Iluminada Sicat said.

But Sicat said Philippine banks had made significant progress in attracting remittances previously coursed through informal channels, such as friends, acquaintances or other travelers.

"Our banking channels here are very active. Not only do they establish their presence in places where we have a large deployment of Filipinos. In places where they don't have a presence, they establish tie-ups," Sicat said.

Compared to the profile of Filipinos leaving for abroad 10 to 15 years ago consisting mostly of unskilled workers, she said more professionals going abroad were able to send double or triple the average remittances in the past.

The BSP took special note of sea-based workers, who account for 25 percent of labor sent overseas.

"I highlight this group of sea-based workers simply because this group of workers covers those who apply the 80-20 percent rule on remittances," Sicat said.

The BSP has been encouraging OFWs to send money through the banks as it was a safer alternative and can help develop better savings habits among OFWs.

For the regulators, better monitoring mechanisms and understanding of these inflows help craft better policies.

MONDAY, AUGUST 7, 2006

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B2-1

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BUSINESS Monday

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Would you give your profits to the poor?

Paradigm asks businesses how much earnings they want, then share the rest

OVER 180 DELEGATES FROM several countries recently went to the Philippines to talk about an economic program where profits of an enterprise will go to the poor.

The Congress on the Economy of Communion was held at the Focolare Mariapolis Peace Center in Tagaytay. It was participated by delegates from the Philippines, South Korea, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Hong Kong, Myanmar, France and Switzerland.

The Economy of Communion or EoC is a new economic paradigm that encourages individuals and groups to set up enterprises whose profits will go to answer the needs of the poor members of the community. It is being offered to Filipino entrepreneurs as a step to alleviate poverty and bridge the wealth gap that is often the root of discord and tension in society.

EoC is now practiced by over 750 successful companies in over 30 countries. It provides the businessman the freedom to determine the amount of profit that he wants to make, his return on his investment and the dividends that the company's stockholders want to declare.

The residual profit is then divided into three parts—not necessarily in equal amounts—intended for reinvestment in the company (capital equipment, expansion program and so forth); for the poor (to begin with the workers and extend to adopted communities; and for the formation of man (to expand the coverage of the EoC).

Luigino Bruni, professor of economics at the University of Milan and member of the international commission of the EoC in Rome, opened the congress with a narration of the evolution of the EoC.

He traced the development of the EoC from the Benedictine monks' integration of work and prayer (6th to 12th century); the establishment of Franciscan banks, the first microfinance institutions to "cure poverty" (15th century); Gandhi's salt march in 1930; to 1991, the launching of the EoC.

Leo Andringa, former regional director of Central Bank of the Netherlands, clarified that "The main motivation for an EoC enterprise exceeds the growth of capital and profit to one of attaining the sense of community in a commercial environment." He also described the model of a future business organization that veers away from the present Anglo-Saxon hierarchical set-up.

The congress presented four business enterprises as models: A bakery in South Korea which employs 140; a management consulting firm in Manila with 700 client-companies and 55 consul-

WOULD/ B2-2

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Ex-officio director

Corporate Securities Info
Raul J. Palabrica

THE APPOINTMENT OF EX-OFficio directors in the governing boards of corporations is slowly becoming a practice in the local business scene.

If you take a close look at the annual reports of the top 50 companies in the country, you will see the names of ex-officio directors included in the roster of the regular members of the board of directors.

Ex-officio (a Latin phrase which means "by virtue of the office") directors are persons who become members of the board without the benefit of an election by the stockholders.

The rule is, directors should be chosen by the stockholders from their ranks during the annual stockholders' meeting.

Also referred to in the business circles as "honorary directors," ex-officio directors are given that title as a matter of accommodation, not by virtue of a right under existing laws.

The manner of choosing ex-officio directors is left to the discretion of the stockholders.

While some corporations make provisions for the selection of ex-officio directors in their Articles of Incorporation or by-laws, others go through it on as-the-need-arises basis.

Recognition

For ceremonial reasons, some stock corporations include the names of ex-officio directors in the list of directors to be elected to the board.

In other companies, the authority to designate honorary directors is delegated to the board of directors.

In what may be considered a carryover of the traditional Filipino respect for elders, the position of ex-officio director is usually given to the founders or pioneers of the corporation who have retired from active participation in the business.

The position is also used as a means of rewarding employees who gave the best years of their lives to the company and who are still mentally and physically alert.

Their experience and expertise come in handy in management's formulation of business policies and projects.

Also, some companies invite prominent business or social personalities to their board through the ex-officio route to give more prestige to their line-up of directors.

And what better way to salve the bruised egos of stockholders who cannot be accommodated in the board room through the regular way than to designate them as ex-officio directors.

Officers

The legality of creating the position of ex-officio director in private corporations has been the subject of numerous queries to the Securities and Exchange Commission.

The request for clarification is understandable because outside of the directors, the Corporation Code mentions only the president, treasurer and secretary as the officers of a corporation.

The enumeration, however, does not prevent the stockholders from including in their Articles of Incorporation or by-laws other positions with officer status that, in their judgment, will help the company accomplish its corporate objectives.

But with regard to directors, the Corporation Code is firm and unequivocal: They must be elected by the stockholders.

The minimum qualification for election to that post is ownership of at least one share of stock.

And once elected, directors shall hold office for one year and until their successors are elected and qualified.

The law requires directors to get that mandate because, acting as a body, they have the authority to exercise all corporate powers, conduct the business of the cor-

EX-OFFICIO/ B2-2

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The continuing quest for innovative strategies–I

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Esther C. Tan

EARLY LAST YEAR, SERIOUS concern over the solvency of the country's biggest pre-need company hit the headlines. With the future education and pension funds of hundreds of thousands of our countrymen at stake, the ensuing public outcry started to snowball. The situation exacerbated when the failure of several other pre-need companies hit the media. By the middle of the year, public confidence in the whole industry had eroded, that industry sales fell 52 percent.

The response of surviving pre-need companies at that time was rather predictable. A lot of money was spent on PR and advertising that highlighted the financial strength of those companies that remained. The thinking was that a "flight to quality" statement would obviously exploit the opportunities that the crisis presented.

What Sun Life did was quite out of the box. Instead of mounting a "me too" ad campaign, we launched a pull strategy with a direct-to-market promotion in the major malls of Metro Manila and key provincial cities. The promo was called "Tune In to Your Future" and it involved rewarding people for long-term saving. It was timed for the last three months of the year—leading up to the Christmas Season—and the creative handle used for the mall tour was something we would not readily associate with a typical pre-need company.

We made the strategic move of creating a blue lake if you will, (not entirely a blue ocean). This value innovation favorably impacted both our cost structure and lifted the value proposition of our buyers. Cost savings achieved and our buying public liked the offering. Over time, we believe that cost will go further down because of the scale economies from the high sales volume generated.

The results were nothing less than astounding. In the first month of the campaign alone, Sun Life Plans sold more than in the previous six months combined. By the end of the three-month campaign, the company was able to turn around its sales performance to a growth of 117 percent year-on-year. The whole pre-need industry, on the other hand, ended last year with a negative growth of 52 percent. From it's ranking of No. 5 in the industry in 2004, Sun Life's pre-need unit ended 2005 as No. 3.

While I am sure many of you would want to know more about the details of that successful campaign, I think that the bigger question for us, in light of our topic this morning, is this: How can a company like Sun Life, which has been around for more than a century, still act so nimbly in responding to market crises and in spotting and seizing opportunities as these arise?

This is the framework by which I would like to approach the subject of strategic innovation. I would like to examine the concepts of strategy and innovation within the broader context of organizational change.

In fact, allow me to be brazen enough to talk about innovation and inexorable change as we observe these in nature and in the cosmos, and from there focus on the selfsame principles as applied in business. Business, after all, is part of and does not operate independently of the universe.

Life developed on Earth only 500 million years after the Earth became stable and cool enough. The process of biological evolution was very slow at first. It took two and a half billion years from the earliest cells to multi-cell animals, and another billion years to evolve through fish and reptiles to mammals.

This slow, tentative start is characteristic of the initial phase of growth. In the business context, this is the start-up phase, which is characterized by a long period of exploring and inventing a pattern of success. It is a phase that involves a great deal of risk-taking, high adaptability and entrepreneurship.

This is typical in the start-up years of many business organizations, and it was certainly the case with Sun Life Financial in the Philippines. Sun Life has been in the Philippines for 111 years. We are the first and the oldest life insurance company in the country.

It began in 1891 when Sun Life's president at that time, T.B. Macaulay, called in Ira Thayer, the company's first global emissary, and told him, "We believe there is a field for life insurance in the Far East, but we don't know for sure ... We want you to go and find out."

And so the good soldier that he was, off Ira Thayer went, aboard the Empress of China, to a long and arduous sea journey that would take him from Vancouver to Yokohama, then Nagasaki, then Shanghai, then Hong Kong, and finally, the Philippines.

In the written account of E.E. White, Sun Life's inspector of agencies who came to Manila for a visit in 1898, on the earliest years of the business in the Philippines reveals the unremitting task of informing and educating people about the principles and merits of life assurance. The suspicion and prejudice, which he noted and which he and his agents had to overcome and transform, could have stemmed from old and misguided notion that taking out an insurance on one's life or on the life of another was a morbid gamble.

There was humble growth and prosperity from the time we commenced operations until the onset of World War II. As a foreign company, our operations were closed by the Japanese occupation forces. In the late '40s, even though we were 50 years old then ... our business, particularly sales, was starting at ground zero.

It was only when we were well in the 1980s that Sun Life underwent what may as well be our second phase of growth. It was also at this time that I joined Sun Life in the early '80s.

In business, this second phase is usually called the normative phase. It is a period of rapid growth. Having discovered a pattern of success, the emphasis is on extending and improving on this success.

In business, companies who find themselves in this second phase experience explosive growth in a relatively short period of time. We are all familiar with the local cases of Smart and Globe, and the SM malls, etc. that very well illustrate this point. It's the point of critical mass for a successful start-up; the turning point—or as is in vogue these days, the tipping point of business.

For Sun Life Philippines, our tipping point happened when we were able to develop and leverage a small but highly effective world-class agents and a career agency system to match, to target a highly lucrative market segment: the AB segment, in particular, the ethnic Chinese in the country.

In 1989, we came to our own and functions were fully devolved to us from Toronto. Manila became Sun Life's Asia Pacific regional headquarters processing both Philippines and Hong Kong transactions.

Manila was the choice not only because of its central location in Southeast Asia, but also because it was the largest component of our business in the region and had an excellent labor force and reasonable operating costs. So as you can see, we're really a teenager who happened to be 107 years old at that time!

After a period of high growth that culminated in our record-breaking sales performance in the year 2000, we launched two companies in 12 months: the Sun Life Asset Management Co. in 2000 and the Sun Life Financial Plans Inc in 2001.

Our vision then was to transform Sun Life from a single-line life insurance company to a multi-line financial services company. With the two companies in place, we were even more formidable, ready to help secure the financial future of our customers.

It is also in the second phase of growth when a company's focus shifts to efficiency: systems, roles and procedures are created and formalized to ensure that "things are done right." This is the stage where hierarchy and bureaucracy establish themselves in the organization. At a certain point during a period of high growth, control and organizational consistency become critically important for the organization as it moves forward. Thus, many companies in phase 2 pursue total quality management, continuous improvement, business process reengineering and such other initiatives toward this end.

We in Sun Life found ourselves in the very same pattern quite recently. We decided to launch a business process reengineering program. In retrospect, if ever we thought of BPR as an innovation strategy, we couldn't have been more wrong. After all, one does not grow by shrinking.

I guess quite a number of companies do think of BPR and TQM as strategic innovation initiatives. It's an erroneous assumption and here is why: quality improvement, while important for ensuring product or service consistency, is rarely effective as a competitive strategy by itself. I always tell people that if their business plan is to do everything that their competitors are doing, except that they intend to do it better, then they really do not have a strategy.

One cannot dislodge a top company simply on the basis of better quality. At that level, all the top companies in the category are perceived to have good quality. And in fact, many consumers already think that the No. 1 became No. 1 because it has the best quality. Convincing them otherwise is going to be like pushing noodle uphill. At best, good TQM, BPR initiatives give you a ticket to play in the game. Winning the game is an altogether different matter.

(The author is chair of Sun Life Financial Phils. This article is based on her lecture at a recent MAP forum. Feedback at mapsec@globenet.com.ph)

Free training for coffee farmers

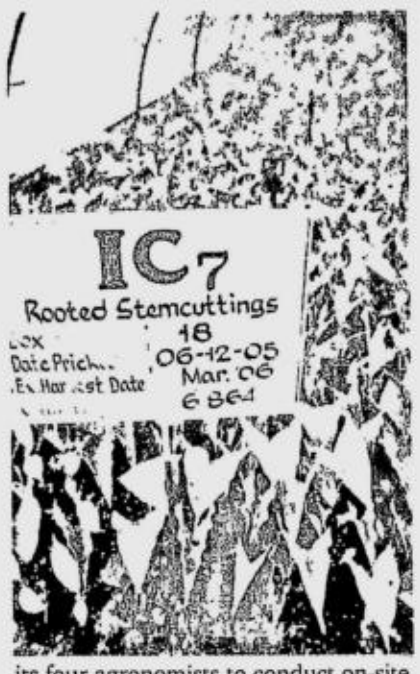
FOR MORE THAN 12 YEARS NOW, the Nestle Experimental and Development Farm (NEDF) in Tagum City, Davao, has been giving free technical training to coffee farmers, technicians and agriculture students.

"What we do is extend technical assistance to the farmers and in some cases put up demonstration farms where we provide inputs while the farmers provide the labor as equity," reveals Zenon Alenton, resident agronomist for NEDF. "We introduce Nescafé technology to them."

According to Alenton, the NEDF has trained over 10,000 farmers, technicians and agricultural students—a fifth of the country's current total number of coffee farmers.

Training, which ranges from three days to two weeks, covers the latest in coffee production technology. Sessions on nursery management, planting and cultivation, harvesting, processing and even marketing of green coffee beans are conducted for free. NEDF even covers the farmers' board and lodging during the training.

All the coffee farmers have to do is go to NEDF. If this is not possible, Nestle Agri-Services Department sends one of its four agronomists to conduct on-site training anywhere in the Philippines.



Alenton said that by introducing the farmers to proven agricultural methods and new technologies, they can drastically increase the quality and quantity of their harvest. "We really need to encourage right coffee farming and that begins with proper training."

And not to mention good planting materials.

NEDF helps propagate high-quality and high-yielding Robusta planting materials by selling it at cost price. In the last five years, NEDF had distributed a substantial number of coffee seeds, coffee seedlings, and rooted cuttings. The planting materials are estimated to cover over 8,700 hectares of coffee plantation generating an estimated 20,000 direct jobs.

In his recent agricultural report, Alenton writes that most of the country's 70,000-hectare coffee plantations need rehabilitation and rejuvenation. Despite this, Alenton reveals that harvesting and processing have generally improved with many farmers delivering grade 1 to grade 2 beans.

"It's not difficult for our farmers to double their yield," Alenton professes. "All they have to do is to plant good planting materials, put the right kind and amount of fertilizers to their coffee trees and maintain them properly."

For inquiries on NEDF and its training programs, call 8980001.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD. Outgoing Procter & Gamble Philippines president and general manager Johnip G. Cua (left) passes on the symbolic key to his successor, James M. Lafferty (right), in a simple turnover rite recently. Looking on is Deb Henretta, president of P&G Asean-Australasia-India (AAI) Market Development Organization. Henretta, in her talk, cited Cua's distinguished leadership during which P&GP had created about 10,000 more jobs.

Would you give your profits to the poor?

From page B2-1

tants; a manufacturing firm in Myanmar making original Italian *gelato* (ice cream) and a small merchandise store in Las Piñas selling school supplies to students.

All businesses—regardless of size—are marked by a harmonious and productive relationship between and among employees and managers and offer their profits for the benefit of the needy.

Ex-officio director

From page B2-1

poration and control all its properties.

In a liberal interpretation of the law, the SEC has ruled that corporations can provide in their by-laws the appointment of ex-officio directors, but subject to the express condition that they shall have no voting rights.

Only the duly elected directors can vote on corporate actions submitted for the consideration of the board.

The honorary directors will be limited to the role of acting as advisers to the regular members of the board.

The corollary effect of this restriction is, the presence or absence of ex-officio directors will not be material in determining the existence of a quorum in board meetings.

Of course, nothing can stop the corporation from stating in its by-laws that no board meeting shall commence unless an ex-officio director is present.

At the end of the day, however, it is the vote of the regular directors that will count. And for which they can be held accountable by the stockholders and the law.

That's what makes the position of ex-officio directors enviable. They can enjoy the perks and privileges of the office minus the responsibilities. *(Feedback at rpalabrica@inquirer. com. ph)*

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Travel solution firm gains Peza accreditation

TRITON DISTRIBUTION SYSTEMS, a new US-based travel solution corporation specialized in distribution technology for travel and tourism industry needs, has entered the Philippines with an accreditation from the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza), spearheading its efforts of establishing the country as its major operations hub in Asia.

The Peza accreditation will allow Triton to enjoy fiscal and non-fiscal incentives under the RA 7916, as part of the national development strategy formulated to boost entry of foreign investments with environment friendly economic zones all over the country to respond to demands for ready-to-occupy locations for foreign companies.

Triton's VP for Operations Terry Byers said the firm has already attracted over 100 travel agencies.

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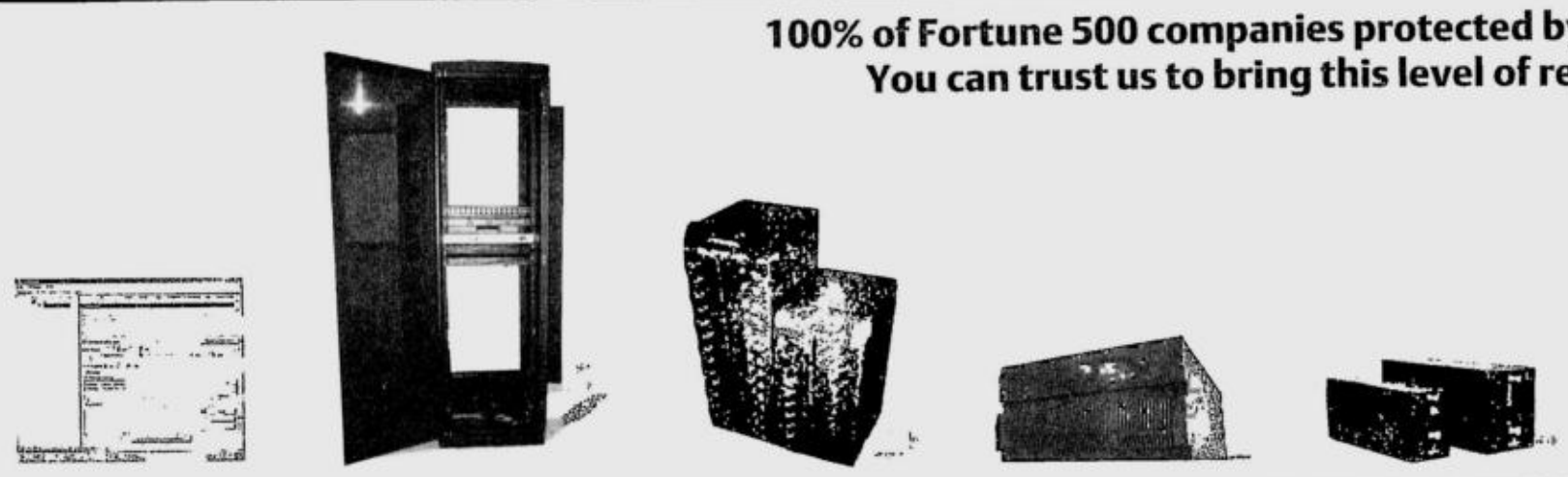

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BUSINESS Monday

The Crucible—Part 2

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

IN THE WINTER OF 1964, Nelson Mandela arrived on Robben Island where he would spend 18 of his 27 prison years. Confined to a small cell, the floor his bed, a bucket for a toilet, he was forced to do hard labor in a quarry. He was allowed one visitor a year for 30 minutes. He could write and receive one letter every six months.

But Robben Island became the crucible which transformed him.

Through his intelligence, charm and dignified defiance, Mandela eventually bent even the most brutal prison officials to his will, assumed leadership over his jailed comrades and became the master of his own prison.

He emerged from it the mature leader who would fight and win the great political battles that would create a new democratic South Africa. ("The Long Walk of Nelson Mandela," Frontline)

Nelson Mandela used his powerful character and imagination to thwart his jailor's attempt to dehumanize him. "If I had not been in prison," he told Oprah in an interview in 2001, "I would not have been able to achieve the most difficult task in life, and that is changing myself."

Mandela didn't see himself as a passive victim, someone who was imprisoned by others, just as an individual who had been "in prison." Instead of allowing his jailors to define him, Mandela fashioned a heroic identity for himself, one that inspired millions in Africa and also around the world.

What qualities allow a leader to prevail, just as Mandela did, in the toughest crucibles?

Perspective. People who successfully go through a crucible as leaders have the right perspective—the ability to see the bigger picture within the heat of the moment.

Leaders have the ability to look beyond the problem, the issue, or the dark hour to find the will and composure to overcome the situation. They see opportunity in the obstacles. As author Robert Clinton said, "The primary difference between a follower and a leader is perspective."

In my book "Winning With People," one of the people principles is the Big Picture Principle. It's a picture to help people see past their selfishness and to recognize a greater reality than themselves. After all, the entire population of the world, with one minor exception, is composed of others.

Faith. Faith is another essential quality of people who persevere through the crucibles of life. Faith is the belief that something better is ahead. In the words of Mother Theresa, "Faith keeps the people who keep the faith."

Nelson Mandela held on through 27 years of brutal imprisonment because he had an unswerving faith that his suffering would ultimately contribute to freedom and justice in South Africa. His faith generated hope, and hope gave him the optimism that his situation could change and would change.

For many leaders like Mandela, faith was the only thing sustaining them through the crucible and the one thing allowing them to hold on to hope.

Adaptive Capacity—the knack to understand context and adjust one's course;

A leader with adaptive capacity possesses an awareness of the surroundings. Such a leader has an intuition that senses the needs of the moment and prioritizes them over personal comfort. In the moment, the leader adapts and adjusts to help others and themselves through the moment.

They have the capacity to acclimate to the demands of their situation. Gail Sheehy says it this way: "The secret of a leader lies in the tests he has faced over the whole course of his life and the habit of action he develops in meeting those tests."

Five final comments on crucibles:

The first crucible is the toughest, since you don't have past experience or a prior victory to look back upon.

Ensuing crucibles get more difficult if they are handled incorrectly. When we do not allow the crucible process to have its way with us, if we quit or bail out, it becomes more difficult the next time around.

Crucibles require patience, perspective, and reflection. They never leave us the same.

Successfully conquering a crucible allows us to help others, which I think is my desire for this edition of LW. If you and I can go through our crucibles as leaders, we gain great confidence and can pass that confidence on to others in the midst of the crucible experience.

(For information on John Maxwell's in-house or public leadership or teamwork workshops, please email us at maxwell@inspire.ph or call 813-2732/03 Text MAXWELL ON to 4632 (Smart) to get daily SMS leadership insights from John Maxwell.)

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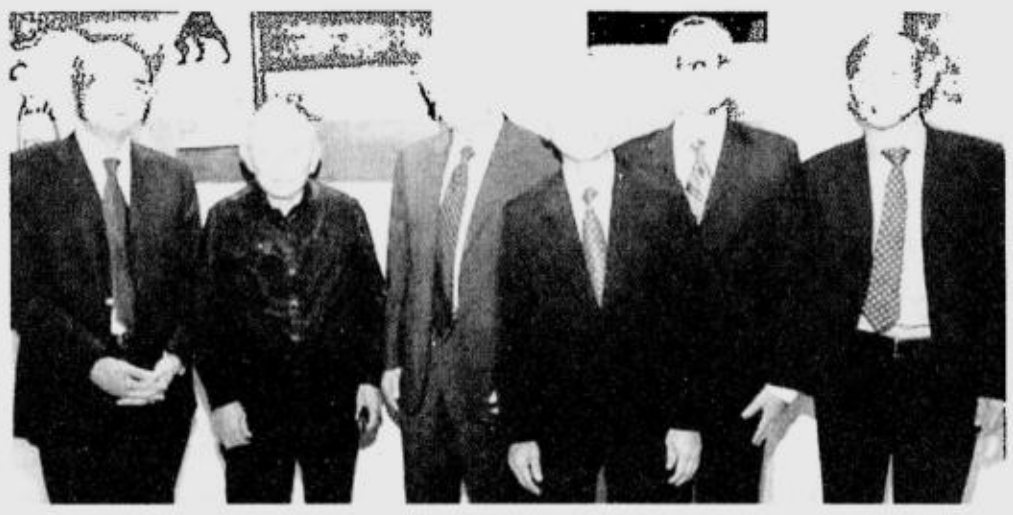

NOBEL LAUREATE VISITS MANILA. Daniel Kahneman (3rd from left), Nobel Laureate in Economic Sciences 2002 flew to Manila to attend a reception dinner held in his honor at the Ayala Museum by Guggenheim Partners. With him are (from left) Richard Po Sr., Washington SyCip, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves, Andrew Rosenfield and Chris Po. Manila was one of three cities Kahneman included on his working Asian Tour. The other two being Hong Kong and Singapore where he met with Minister Mentor Lee Kuan Yew. Kahneman received the Nobel Prize for his work in Behavioral Finance. Behavioral Finance marries psychology and classical economics to better understand investor behavior.

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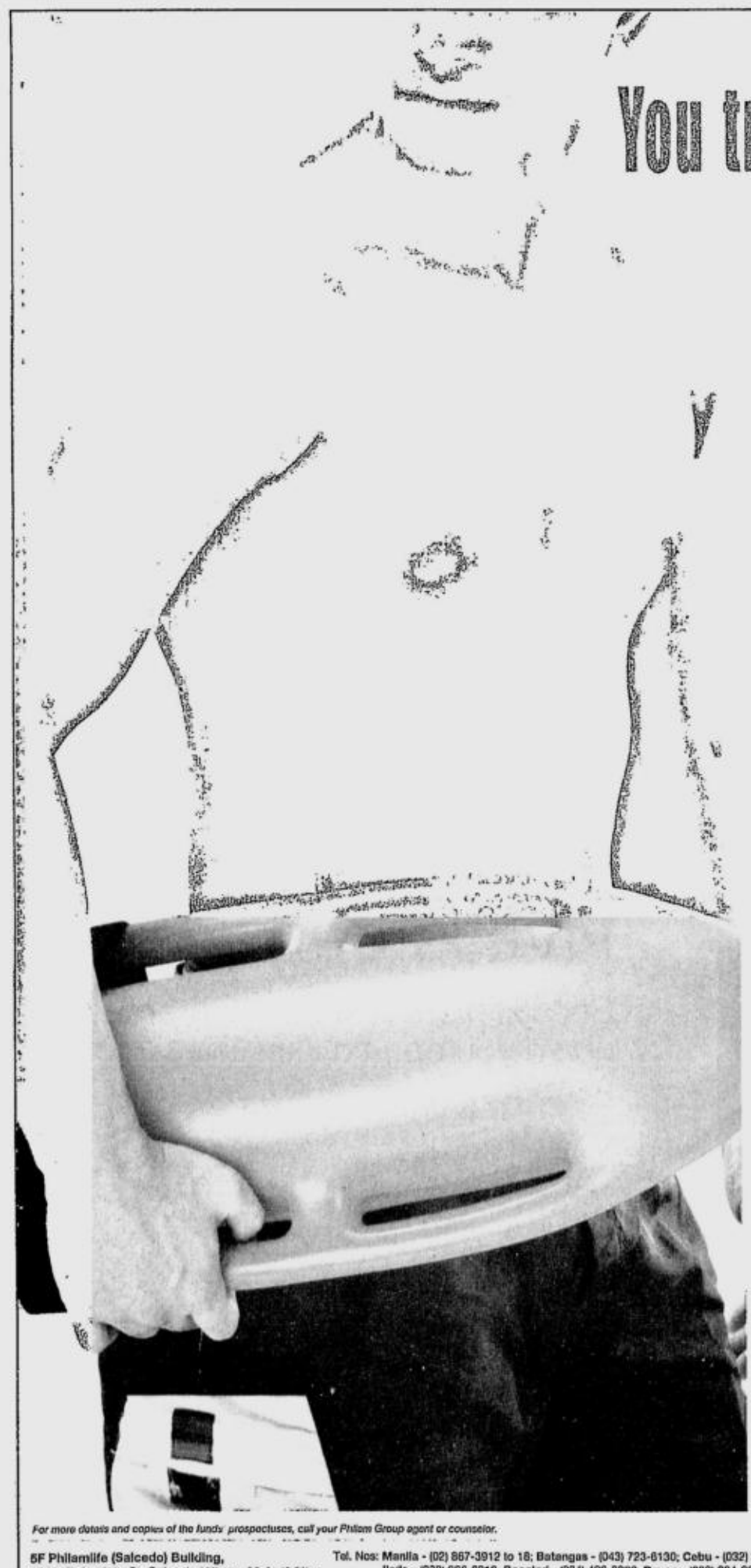

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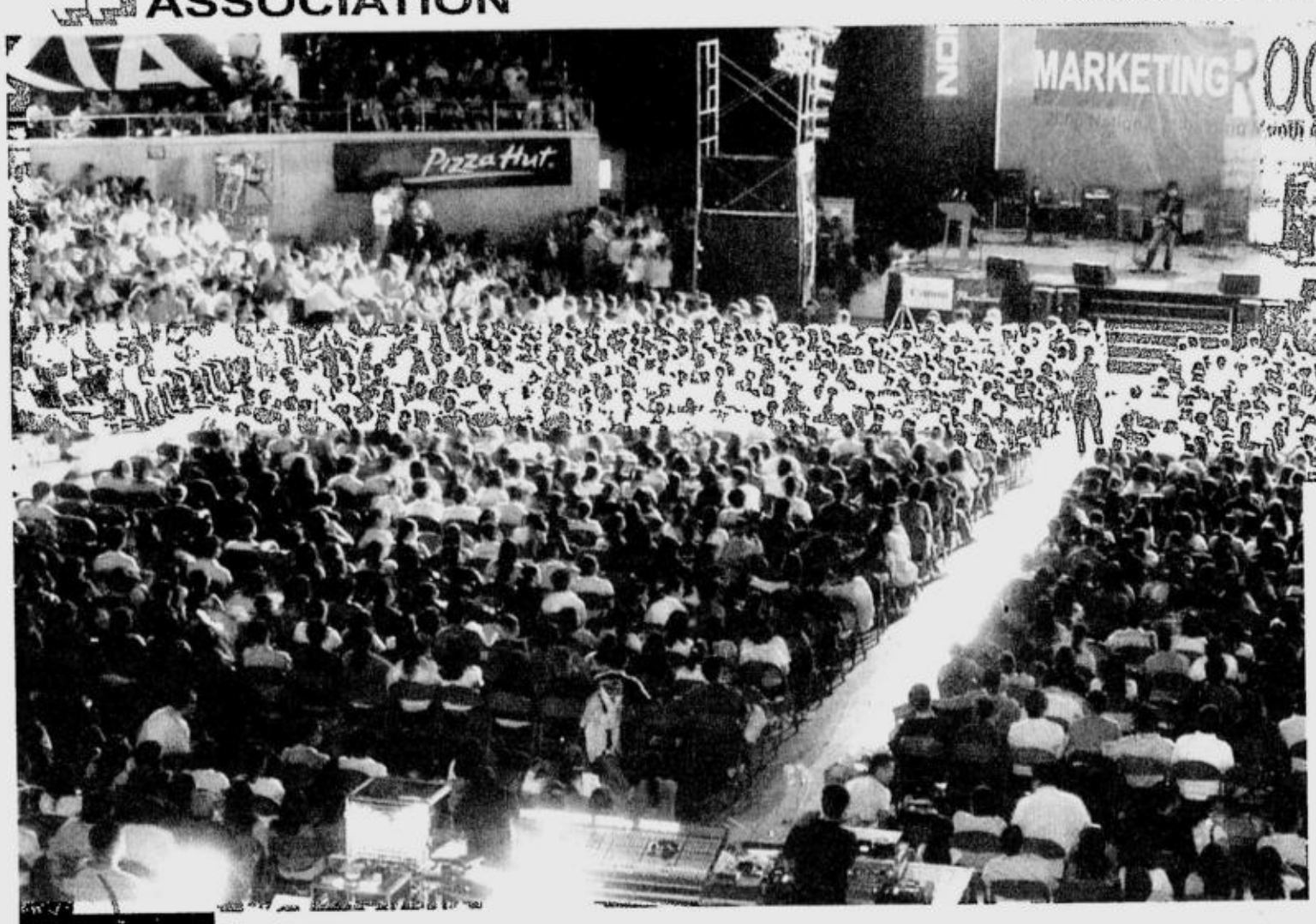
AME ASSOCIATION OF MARKETING EDUCATORS OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.



MARKETING ROCKS

thousands join 2006 Strategic Marketing Conference .... the biggest student confab in history.

Three years ago, the month of July was declared by the government as the National Marketing Month (NMM). This celebration is a time when the marketing discipline takes center stage and the players of the game all converge to exchange ideas on their best practices to keep up with the latest trends in this dynamic field.

This year's celebration of the National Marketing Month has created synergies among some of the integral figures in the industry. Spearheading this annual activity is the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA), along with the Association of Marketing Educators (AME) and full support from the Philippine Junior Marketing Association (PJMA). The Strategic Marketing (Stratmark) Conference and the Strategic Marketing Competition was held Friday, August 4 at the Araneta Coliseum.

But just what encompasses this annual celebration of the NMM? Edith Dychiao, director of the 2006 NMM Celebration, explains in detail: The National Marketing Month is celebrated by all the PMA chapters nationwide, with each having their own set of events. The highlight of these activities is the "Strategic Marketing Conference and Competition for Students."

With its theme "Marketing Rocks", the 2006 Strategic Marketing (Stratmark) Conference and Competition is literally and figuratively composed of the country's great achievers and practitioners and best among the bands of today. The Stratmark and the competition is the continuing effort of the two most respected marketing associations in the country, the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) and the Association of Marketing Educators (AME), in cooperation with the country's top young student marketers, the Philippine Junior Marketing Association (PJMA). With the Stratmark conference serving as an avenue for students to exchange valuable viewpoints and getting attuned to what is happening in the marketing field, it hopes to sustain the effort of producing future Filipino world-class marketers.

Philippine Marketing Association president Tom C. Banguis Jr considers the Conference and the Competition as historic, since it is a joint undertaking that was started last year.

The conference was the first half of the culmination which was attended by an estimated 7,000 students from 97 schools nationwide. Keynote speaker was Butch Jimenez (SVP-retail market, PLDT). Marketing leaders who imparted their vision and knowledge included: Blen Fernando (VP-marketing of Alaska Milk) , Jack Madrid (managing director of MTV Philippines), Sandeep Khanna (head of marketing, Nokia Philippines), and Jos Ortega (chair and CEO of BrandLab).

Speakers

Butch Jimenez, SVP Retail Business Group, PLDT (keynote speaker)

Sandeep Khanna, Head of Marketing, Nokia

Jos Ortega, Chairman and CEO, BrandLab

Grace Magno, Head of Marketing, ACI

Jack Madrid, Managing Director, MTV Phils.

Blen Fernando, VP Marketing, Alaska Milk

UP-Diliman bags 2006 Stratcom

University of the Philippines-Diliman (UP-Diliman) received the P100,000 cash award from Nokia Philippines as it garnered top honors in the 2006 Stratmark Competition held Aug. 4 at the Araneta Coliseum.

The UP marketing student team successfully defended the Nokia case study, thoroughly impressing this year's board of judges composed of Sandeep Khanna (head of marketing, Nokia Philippines), Tom Banguis (president, PMA), Jade Tulio (VP-marketing, HBC), Grace Magno (marketing director, Araneta Center Inc) and Jack Madrid (managing director, MTV-Philippines).

The finals of the Strategic Marketing competition was a tight contest among the top five universities in Metro Manila. The finalists were chosen among the 28 schools that participated in the regional qualifying competition. The main objective of the competition is to search for the best critical thinkers who can apply the marketing concepts into practice using the actual case that was given. In order to eliminate biases, the top five schools in the finals were given code names so that both judges and the audience would not know which schools they represented. The other finalists were students from Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University-Taft, University of Sto. Tomas (UST), and Southville Foreign College.

Head of Marketing of Nokia Sandeep Khanna hands over the P100,000 check to champ UP Diliman

The Big Dome was transformed into a festive arena as students were brought to experience useful insights from some of the main Marketing movers, as well as special performances by the country's top bands, namely Shamrock, Top Suzara, Itchyworms, Metafour, and the final-hour presentation of Orange and Lemons. The audience was then treated to special giveaways.

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ASSOCIATION OF MARKETING EDUCATORS OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.

Stratcom Board of Judges
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Tom Banguis Jr., PMA President

Chere Yturralde, VP external AME

Edith Dychiao, Director, 2006 NMM

Jojo Ajero, VP Youth and Academe

2006 National Marketing Month Celebration Stratmark/StratCompetition Committee

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Director
2006 National Marketing Month / Stratmark Conference

Jojo G. Ajero
VP Youth & Academe / StratCompetition

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President , Association of Marketing Educators of the Phils. (AME)

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Annabelle Payawal
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AME Secretariat

PJMA Board of Directors and PMA Secretariat 2006

Warmest greetings to the officers and members of the Philippine Marketing Association and the Association of Marketing Educators as you hold your Annual Strategic Marketing Conference and Competition for Students.

We can achieve a highly sustainable economic growth if we further strengthen our workforce through education and training. Let us continue giving our people, especially our students and our youth, the tools necessary for them to become more productive citizens.

Your theme, "World Class Marketing" complements our government's 10-point legacy agenda on socio-economic and political reforms and our goals in the Medium-Term Philippine Development Plan for 2004-2010. it emphasizes on giving our country a competitive edge in the global market by developing future leaders and movers now.

This year, we are promoting income-generating activities at the national and local levels, and I expect you to participate in these endeavors. May you have a successful conference and congratulations to the winners of the competition.

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

We "move up" to unprecedented heights with this year's Strategic Marketing Conference, with attendance expected to break 10,000 students and professionals.

This is a clear indication of the outstanding partnership of the Philippine Marketing Association and the Association of the Marketing Educator (AME), together with the support groups such as the Philippine Junior Marketing Association (PJMA), to "move up to world class" to properly respond to the challenges of globalization!

Globalization has altered the economic landscape and has brought about tremendous opportunities for "world-class" Philippine business to grow and expand in a scale never considered possible before. The overseas successes of Oishi, Jollibee, Chowking, SM, Goldilocks as well as the impressive domestic performance of our telecom companies like PLDT, Smart, Globe show the unquestionable ability of Filipino professionals to excel even in highly competitive fields.

The challenge is to establish "world-class" as a norm for Philippine businesses to enhance our competitiveness!

The Strategic Marketing Conference and the Stratmark Competition are vehicles to help prepare our youth to the intense challenges of globalization and enable this country to achieve unprecedented success which is possible only with "world-class" marketing.

Move Up to World Class. Class Natin!

TOM C. BANGUIS, JR
President
Philippine Marketing Association

The Association of Marketing Educators of the Philippines extends its sincerest appreciation to all the student-delegates and the marketing educators who have taken part in this year's Strategic Marketing Conference and Competition held on August 4 at the Araneta Coliseum. Your presence in the event expresses more than just active participation. The Stratmark Conference could not have become a tradition if not for the encouragement the organizers have elicited from your support year after year.

In all things that you, delegates, have communicated in terms of your reactions, feedback and observations on the programme--the lectures, the speakers, the competition and everything else, expressed much more than your written evaluation. They mirrored the true value of what we have invested in the work we have done.

The demands and challenges posed by the profession to the students continue. This requires creative and methodical modeling of programs. That is why AME recognizes PMA's great contribution to marketing education in the country by creating avenues to bring out the best capabilities of the students. For years, they have carefully crafted the strategic marketing competitions which have greatly drawn interest and resulted to valuable learning.

In the meantime, we are recommitting ourselves to the work we have started because there is still much that needs to be done to develop well-rounded, competent, dedicated, and competitive marketing professionals. Although organizing activities for the marketing students has not been easy because the programs have to be something different, interesting, and need-satisfying for them to patronize, this has challenged the two organizations—PMA and AME—to all the more plan better programs for the future.

Congratulations to the success achieved by the Strategic Marketing Conference 2006. God bless all of us.

Cynthia A. Araneta-Abella
President
Association of Marketing Educators Philippines

For the past 3 years, the Philippine Marketing Association (PMA) celebrates the National Marketing Month (NMM) with various significant activities. One of the highlights of the NMM is the Strategic Marketing Conference which addresses the needs of the youth to enrich and upgrade their knowledge of marketing through the inputs from the marketing practitioners. The participants have been steadily growing. This year is again a banner year with attendees coming from the top universities in Metro Manila and the regional schools.

Alongside with the Strategic Marketing Conference, the Strategic Marketing Competition highlights the best of the students' talents and creativity among the various colleges and universities.

These two major activities of the PMA, together with the Association of Marketing Educators (AME) and the Philippine Junior Marketing Association (PJMA), are worthy endeavors toward achieving the vision of making the Filipino marketers truly world class.

Let's all join hands in rocking the world of Marketing!!

Edith D. Dychiao
Director
2006 National Marketing Month Celebration

The thousands of marketing students who flocked to Araneta Coliseum to both learn from the great speakers and enjoy the fantastic bands during the 2006 Strategic Marketing Conference and Competition are an attestment to more exciting times ahead of the marketing field. It is my strong belief that this event exhibited once more the Philippine Marketing Association and the Association of Marketing Educator's thrust of not only furthering the marketing profession but more importantly, marking it world-class.

To the men and women who made this event a resounding success, especially to the Philippine Junior Marketing Association, our sincerest gratitude. Our salute to the speakers, who unselfishly shared their expertise to the participants. And to the future of the Philippine Marketing, our marketing students, may you continue in the pursuit of world-class excellence.

Virgilio C. Ajero
VP Youth & Academe
Philippine Marketing Association

We salute the achievers of the 2006 Strategic Marketing Competition for their inspired performances. Thanks to the perseverance of our partners, the Association of Marketing Educators (AME) and the Philippine Junior Marketing Association (PJMA) for inviting the thousands of marketing students in this year's confab. Truly, the Stratmark Conference and Stratmark Competition is the biggest student conference ever.

They have proven that a lot of hardwork and dedication can generate success.

As this year's over-all chair, I am privilege to extend our heartfelt thanks to the sponsors: Araneta Center, Nokia, URC, Chowking, Kraft , HBC, Philippine Graphic and to all other sponsors. To our keynote speaker Butch Jimenez, our speakers, board of judges and the PMA Secretariat our sincerest gratitude.

Again, thank you very much for another exemplary year.

Ruby T. Ramores
Over-all Chairman, National Marketing Month Celebration

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Back (from left) Cergen Go (Director, PR & Corp. Comm./Internal Auditor), Jojo Ajero (VP Youth & Academe), Mylene Sazon (Director, 27th Agora Awards), Alex Flores, (VP Chapter), Donald Lim (Immediate Past President), Hermie del Rosario (Treasurer/ Ways & Means), Edwin Mapanao (Director, Agora Conference) and Jimmy Siybauco (Board Secretary). Middle (from left) Gina Luengas (Director Meetings & Attendance), Arlene Martinez (Director, Fellowship & Sports), Erly de Guzman (EVP & Director NMC), Ricky Alegre (VP Education). Front (from left) Lizanne Uychaco (VP Membership), Tom Banguis Jr. (2006 President), Vivian Faustino (Director, Government and Consumer Affairs) and Edith Dychiao (Director, 2006 NMM) with Gerry Ablaza (inducting officer).

2006 AME OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

First row (from left) Elizabeth B. Amaranto (PUP), Secretary General; Carmela M. Ibañez (Asia Pacific College), Vice President-Internal; Cynthia A. Abella (University of the East Manila), AME National President; Chere Yturralde (Angeles University Foundation), Vice President-External; Margarita E. Peros (CEU), Treasurer; Alan C. Pagsuyuin (De La Salle Lipa), Auditor; and Twinkle M. Amparo (De La Salle University-Dasmariñas), PRO. Second row (from left) Dr. Gerald S. Abergos (I/AME); Ma. Victoria S. Abergos (Adamson University); Amelia D. Balan (Centro Escolar University); Tom C. Banguis Jr., President, Philippine Marketing Association and Inducting Officer; Arvin G. de Leon (Central Philippine University); Dr. Minerva D. Maylem (Central Luzon State University); Elisa S. Diaz (Batanges State University); Jed J. Loma (Asia Pacific College) and Evangeline B. Mina (De La Salle College of Saint Benilde), Directors.

Edwin Mapanao, Chairman, 2006 Stratcompetition

Ruby Ramores, Chairman 2006 NMM and Hermie del Rosario, PMA Treasurer

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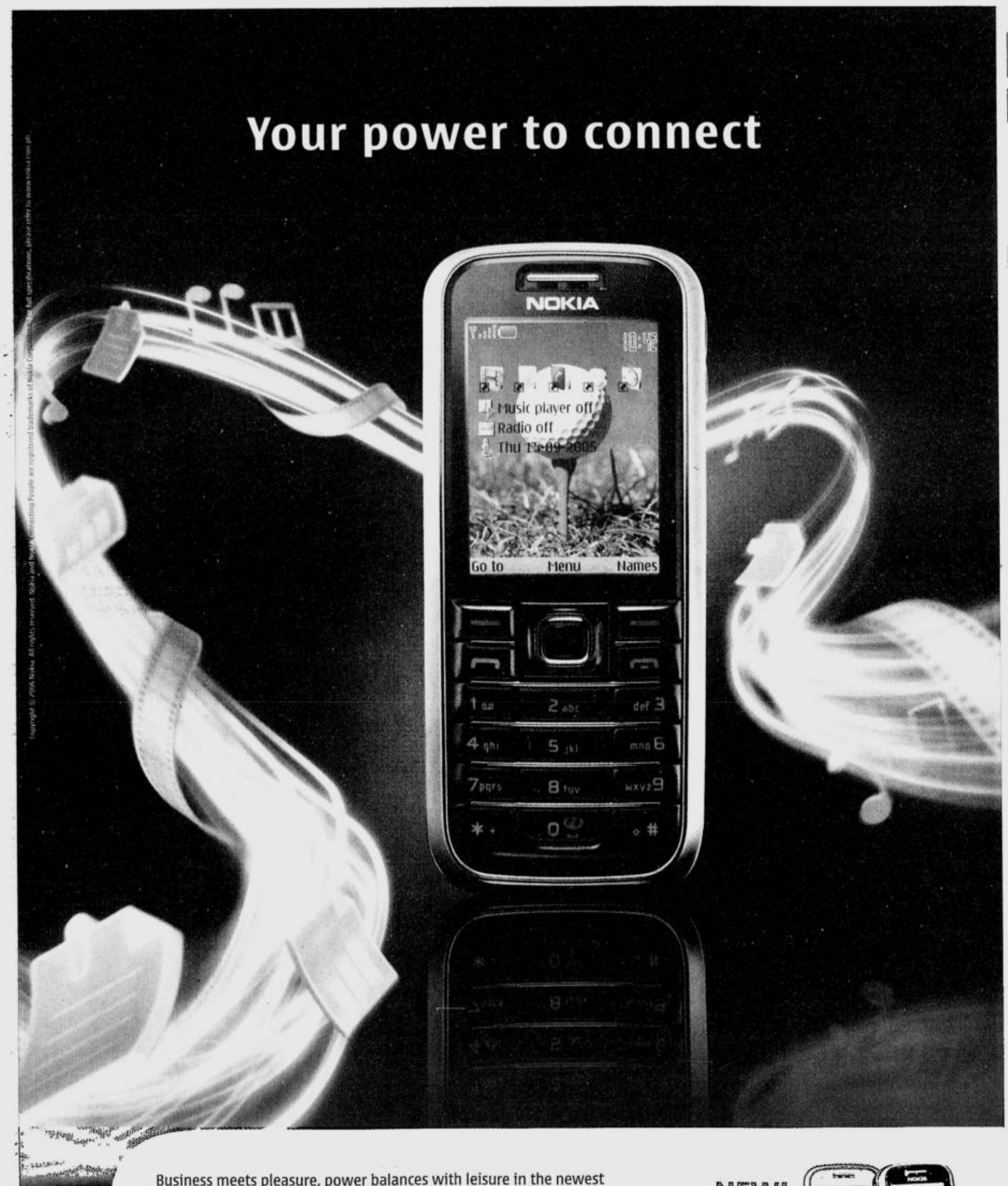
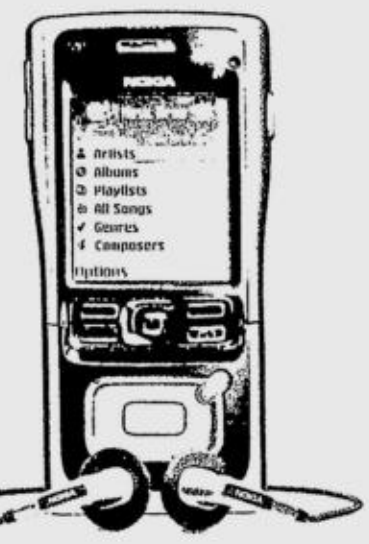


Nokia introduces the Nokia N91 for a true mobile music experience

Storage for up to 3000 songs, plus smartphone functionality in an ultra-portable package

Manila, Philippines - Nokia recently introduced the Nokia N91 multimedia, the company's latest device optimized for mobile music consumption. With room for up to 3000 songs on the integrated 4-gigabyte hard disk, the Nokia N91 delivers a premier music experience.

In addition, the industry standard 3.5mm stereo headset jack and easy transfer of music files from your PC help make the Nokia N91 a connected mobile jukebox. Encased in stainless steel, the Nokia N91 has dedicated music keys on its face, which slide down to reveal the phone keypad. The Nokia N91 is a part of the new Nokia Nseries range, bringing you the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities. "The Nokia N91 delivers both a fantastic music experience and cutting-edge phone features," said Parikshit Bhasin, Country General Manager, Nokia Philippines. "What sets the Nokia N91 apart is the fact that it is always connected - you can download new music while on the move, add it to your favorite playlist and then share your playlist with friends. It's truly the world's best mobile connected jukebox."



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The Nokia N91 serves up to 12.5 hours of great sound via the included stereo headset with remote control. Enjoying your music collection has never been easier, as the Nokia N91 supports a wide range of digital music formats including MP3, M4A, AAC and WMA.

Nokia N91 is compatible with a number of accessories from industry leading brands Bose(R), Harman Kardon(r), JBL(r), and Sennheiser. In addition to using their favorite audio accessories with the Nokia N91 through its standard 3.5mm jack, consumers can maximize their audio experience by choosing products from a line-up of Nokia tested and recommended audio accessories*.

Get Music

Packed with multiple connectivity options, such as WCDMA, WLAN and Bluetooth wireless technology, the Nokia N91 makes it easy for you to find and enjoy music when and where you want. With the Nokia N91, you can quickly and easily find and purchase music over the air to your device from your operator's music store.

Manage Music

Drag and drop your personal music collection from your PC to your Nokia N91 or synchronize your recent music purchases with your PC via USB 2.0. You can also create and manage your playlists directly on your Nokia N91, or shuffle songs around to build your optimal listening experience.

Share Music

A revolutionary feature of the Nokia N91 is the possibility to share your playlists with friends by multimedia message, email or Bluetooth. Proudly show off your musical taste or simply share the latest songs that have been stuck in your head. The Nokia N91 also contains the latest multimedia technologies and smartphone functionalities, including a 2 megapixel camera for print-quality photos, email support, a full web browser and video sharing.

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IN THIS ISSUE

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso** *Subsection Editor* **Lito B. Zulueta**

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Blood Compact relived in pageantry

The reenactment presented an authentic slice of Bohol history

DATU Sikatuna (Alfonso Corbeta) and conquistador Miguel Lopez de Legazpi (Winston Sendrijas) forge a treaty of cooperation and friendship in the musical "Sandugo Oracles."

By Raphael Bartholomew
Contributor

THE IMAGE OF BOHOLANO priestess Karyapa tugging on Rajah Sikatuna's arm and imploring him to ignore Miguel Lopez de Legazpi's arrival to the Philippines is not what most people associate with the blood compact the two men joined in 1565. But it's precisely what the creative minds behind Bohol's Sandugo reenactment, held July 23 in Tagbilaran City, wanted audiences to see.

Karyapa's prophecy that the Europeans would destroy local civilization, the role that a lesser-known *datu*, Sigala, played in convincing Sikatuna to accept Legazpi's offer, and the influence of an earlier raid on Bohol by Portuguese slave-traders are parts of the Sandugo story that, until this year's performance, were known by few people other than historians.

The hour-long reenactment, "Sandugo Oracles," directed by Lutgardo Labad, founder and chair of the Bohol Arts and Cultural Heritage Council, recounted the historic meeting between East and West through interpretive dance, pantomime, song and a narrative soundtrack in Bohol's native Visayan.

Labad said he wanted to "clarify" the Sandugo legend for the audience of over 7,000 by going beyond typical reenactments, which only depict Legazpi and Sikatuna meeting, drinking goblets filled with each other's blood and little else.

"The performance highlights the impact on the native population and makes people think anew of their own realities," Labad said. "It could launch a creative movement rooted in our own history, culture and traditions."

"Many of the people watching the performance will say, 'Did that really happen?'" said Marianito Luspo, a historian at Holy Name University in Tagbilaran, who wrote the script. "The elements of Blood Compact history that aren't normally accepted make Legazpi and Sikatuna come alive. Without that, it becomes a static, sterile event."

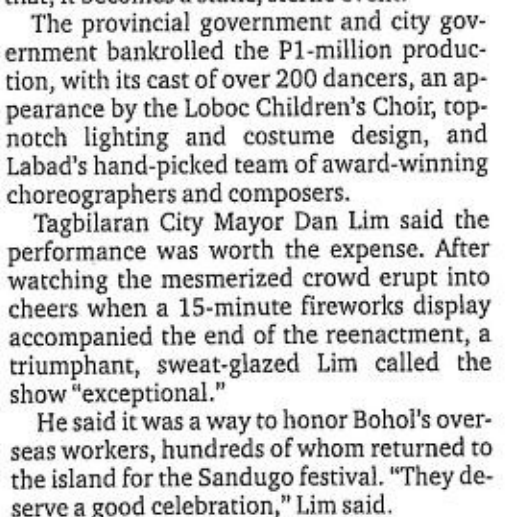
The provincial government and city government bankrolled the P1-million production, with its cast of over 200 dancers, an appearance by the Loboc Children's Choir, top-notch lighting and costume design, and Labad's hand-picked team of award-winning choreographers and composers.

Tagbilaran City Mayor Dan Lim said the performance was worth the expense. After watching the mesmerized crowd erupt into cheers when a 15-minute fireworks display accompanied the end of the reenactment, a triumphant, sweat-glazed Lim called the show "exceptional."

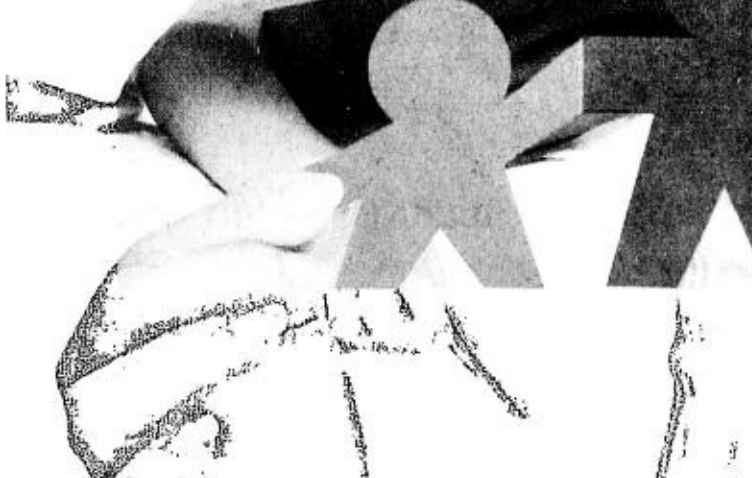
He said it was a way to honor Bohol's overseas workers, hundreds of whom returned to the island for the Sandugo festival. "They deserve a good celebration," Lim said.

Before the evening reenactment, the crowd enjoyed an afternoon of street dancing by some of the Philippines' best-known troupes. Kalibo's Ati-atihan dancers, the Masskara con-

BLOOD/ C4



DATU Sikatuna borne aloft by *balangay* warriors



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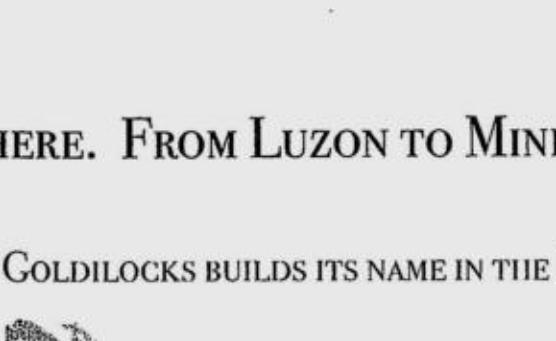

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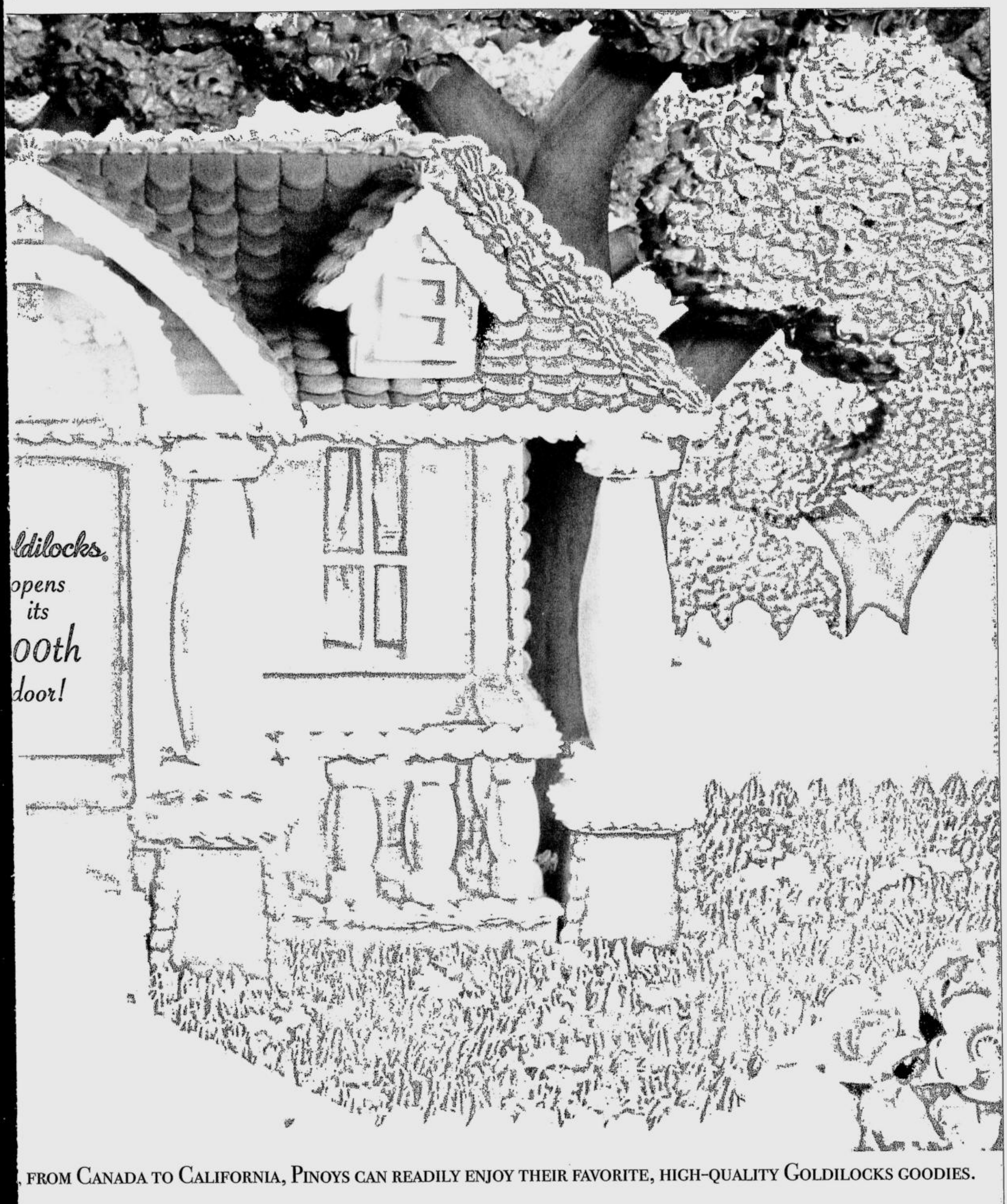

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- Last May 2006, Goldilocks Food Processing Plant was awarded the AAA accreditation (Triple A) rating by the Department of Agriculture National Meat Inspection Service.
- The Goldilocks Food Processing Plant has been certified to have met the requirements of the Department of Agriculture Administrative Order No. 9 on the mandatory application of the Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) program in the processing of Pinoydeli Pork Barbeque.
- Goldilocks has complied with the rules and regulations on meat inspection pursuant to Presidential Decree No.7 and Executive Order No. 137. Goldilocks can thus continue meat processing for domestic and international meat trade.

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Goldilocks 40 Thoughtful Years!

Blood Compact relived in pageantry

From page C1

tingent from Bacolod City, and Cebu City's renowned Sinulog ensemble wowed the audience with their banging drums, energetic undulations and creative costumes.

In between dance performances, a steady parade of celebrities, including Bohol natives Giselle Sanchez and Rey "Boom-Boom" Bautista, as well as American crooner Bobby Soul and his darling daughter Tamika, helped spectators stave off boredom while they waited for darkness to fall so the reenactment could begin.

Street dancing may be a perennial audience-pleaser, but Luspo said he was glad "Sandugo Oracles" would be the main event. Luspo said street dancing tended to ignore local styles in favor of the more popular *sinulog* moves from Cebu.

"Street dancing is a charming novelty but it's not conducive to developing and conserving local dance steps," he said. "Borrowing the *sinulog* is a surefire way to win an award, but local tradition has been compromised in favor of what's more commercially viable."

The Sandugo reenactment presented an authentic slice of Bohol history for the local audience, and showcased what Labad called the island's "greatest human resource"—the talent of the people.

FREE interpretation of a séance in modern dance performed by Nina Verula and the Diwanag Dance Theater Company of the Holy Name University in Bohol, with choreography by Julius Sollesta and direction by Lutgardo Labad

2006 DISCOVER HONG KONG YEAR

"At the Hong Kong Shopping Festival, everyone is a shopaholic!"

Get ready for the ultimate shopping extravaganza at the Hong Kong Shopping Festival from 24 June to 31 August 2006.

The diverse shopping experiences that offer endless value and fun for the whole family. Discover compelling travel deals, unique gifts, delights for the whole family. Discover compelling travel deals, unique gifts, bargain hunt to top famous brands. With fabulous discounts and promotions, you and your family will find that Hong Kong truly is a shopper's paradise.

With late night shopping and dining participating stores and restaurants will stay open till 10pm or later, so the entire family can indulge in longer hours of shopping. The shopping and dining experiences will bring you even more surprises with a chance to win fantastic prizes from the Hong Kong Shopping Festival Lucky Draw.

When you visit the shopping districts, your family can take a stroll over to the Hong Kong Cultural Centre Piazza and enjoy the 10 minutes multimedia show, Aqua Fantasia.

Be sure to get your Bonus Guide containing loads of extra shopping privileges and offers at any of the in-town HKTB Visitor Information & Services Centres. Don't forget to visit the new mini-website at DiscoverHongKong.com for the latest events and hot items plus fabulous offers from participating merchants of the Hong Kong Shopping Festival.

There's no better time to visit and discover everything on offer. Besides exciting shopping promotions, mega events and an incredible array of international cuisine, Hong Kong has a number of education attractions for children like museums and theme parks such as the newly opened Hong Kong Wetland Park. So start planning today with Hong Kong Shopping Festival. And watch your family become [illegible]

2006 DISCOVER HONG KONG YEAR

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UNIQUE SHOPPING EXPERIENCE AWAITS YOU AT THE 2006 HONG KONG SHOPPING FESTIVAL

From 24 June to 31 August, a frenzy of buying fun sweeps Hong Kong with the 2006 Hong Kong Shopping Festival! This annual shopping extravaganza offers an enthralling and unique visitor experience taking diversity, trendiness and best-value-for-money shopping in Asia's world city to new heights.

Hong Kong offers shoppers fantastic shopping themes: world-class fashion and beauty items, top-of-the-line jewellery and watches, cutting edge consumer electronics and unique Chinese traditions and indulge yourself during this fantastic celebration of shopping!

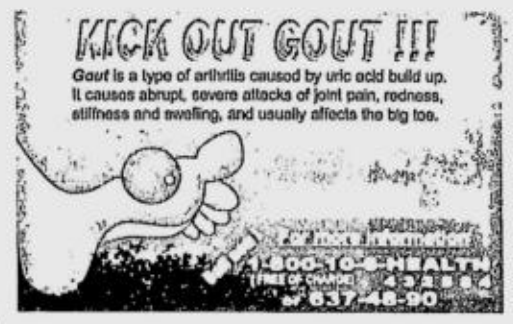
Shopping fun gets better as night falls. The mood is enhanced as many shops stay open until 10pm or later and some restaurants serve their mouth-watering array of cuisines and special dining treats later still.

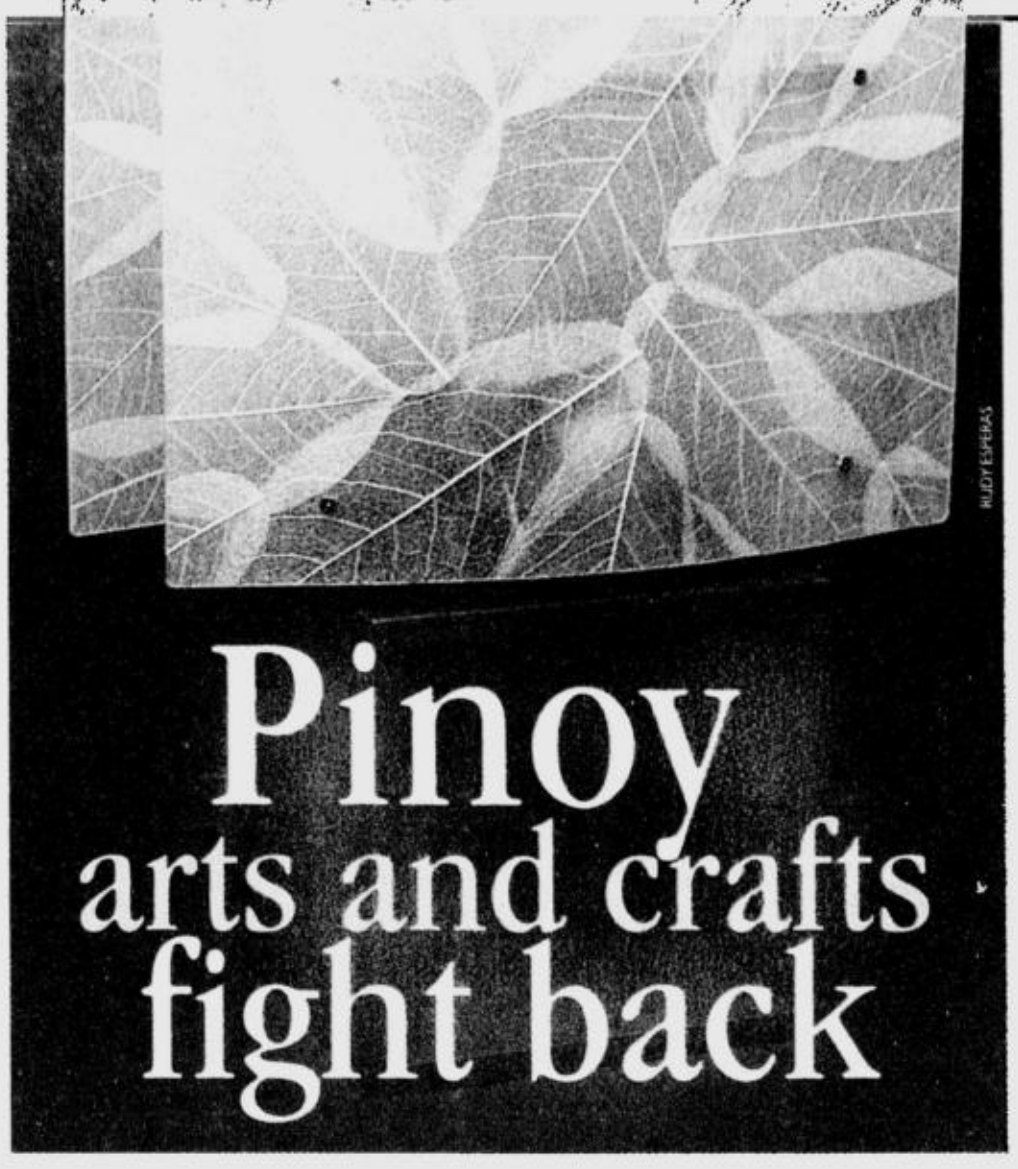
And that's not all. Spend to your heart's content and you could go home a winner in the 2006 Hong Kong Shopping Festival Lucky Draw! There is a range of incredible prizes to be won when you spend at participating shops and restaurants and enter the Lucky Draw. So now you have even more reasons to shop and dine to your heart's content.

The Hong Kong Shopping Festival also features a wonderful anchor event called **Aqua Fantasia**, a dazzling multimedia light and water show that creates stunning images!

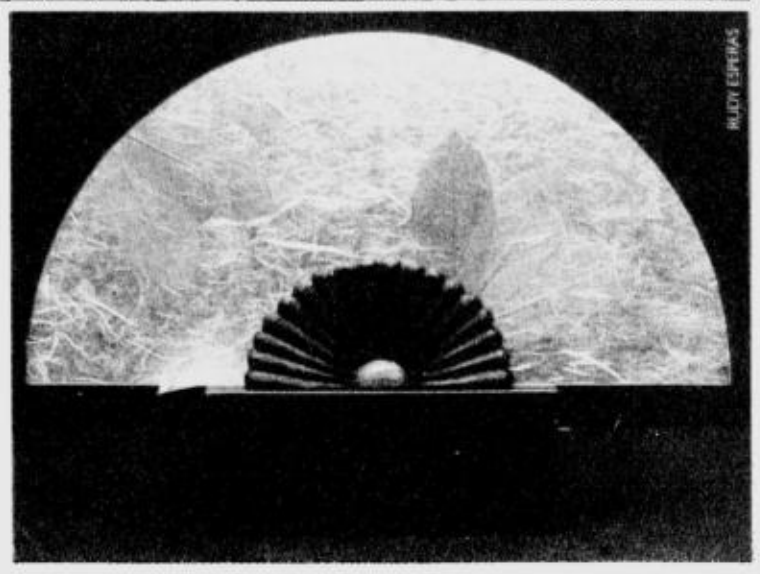
The Hong Kong Shopping Festival is a wonderful opportunity to indulge yourself in a shopping spree like no other that will surely satisfy your shopping desires!

ADVT

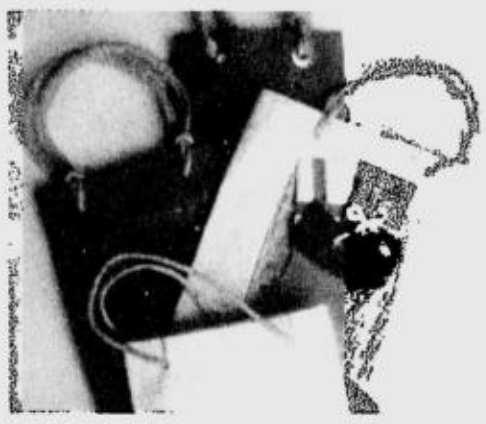




Pinoy arts and crafts fight back



LAMP of multi-colored leaves, fibers and wooden stand, AJ Arts and Crafts Industries



PAPER bags, Papelipa

By Ruth L. Navarra

Despite tough global competition, Pinoys designs continue to make strides and break into the export market

WHAT IS THE FATE OF A *guyabano* leaf?

That it will be a thing of beauty after it has been fossilized and skeletonized. That it will be admired for years to come while it's stuck firmly, permanently, to a resin in form of a lamp. That from the depths of Tuguegarao it will fly to as far as the United States.

The *guyabano* leaf along with the leaves of *narra*, *kamagong* and other indigenous trees will get far, thanks to entrepreneur Alex Luzano of AJ's Arts and Crafts Industries.

"It took us two years to finalize the formula that will make leaves stick to a resin. We've experimented with different leaves because not all can be fossilized," says Luzano.

"We even have a sample that we just leave outside the house for the past three to four years just to be sure it won't fall off."

But why the obsession? Why is it important to make it stay on the outside while they could press it between two glasses, the way manufacturers from other countries do?

"The foreign market likes the texture," says Luzano. This is what gives them the edge over other manufacturers.

Capiz shells

Like the Luzanos, Virgilio Sanchez of the Makvel Enterprise Inc. also makes use of indigenous raw materials abundant in the country. For over 19 years, Makvel has been making lanterns out of capiz shell. Recently they have expanded their business to making other capiz products.

"The high-quality capiz materials that we use set it apart from the rest of the world," says Sanchez.

"Only five countries in the world have capiz shells but we have the best and the finest. China does not have them."

Makvel has created home décor and other novelty items of shells sourced from Visayas, Roxas City and parts of Bicol and Bataan.

Paper art

For Papelipa Handmade Paper and Crafts owner Teofista Exconde, it's not just the raw materials but also the production that make her paper products stand out.

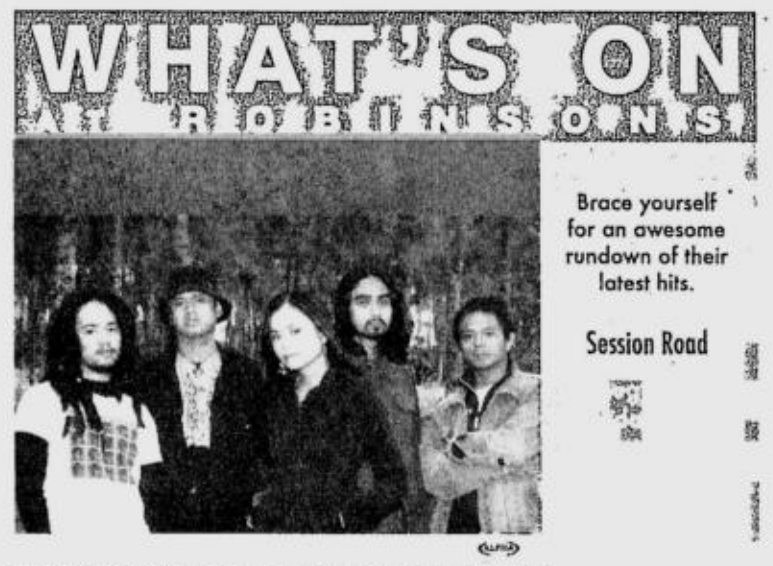
"All our products are handmade. They are from fibrous materials like abaca, *salago*, *cogon*, paper trimmings from printing press and banana stalks," says Exconde. "We even plant our own banana stalks."

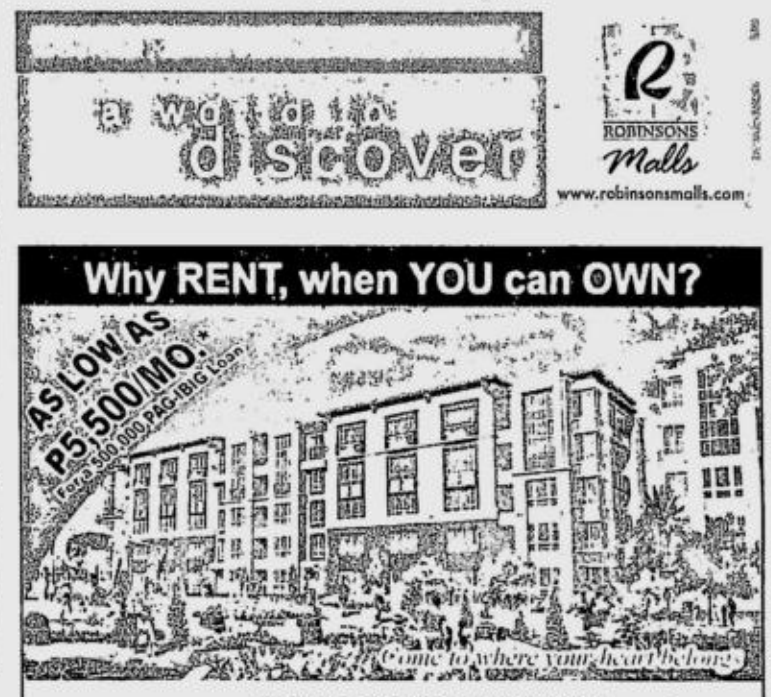
She got the idea to make paper after years of being a research specialist in the Forest Product Research and Development Institute of the Department of Science and Technology.

"We had a hard time getting into the local market because Filipinos then liked their paper white and smooth, ours were brown and rough," she says. "But the foreigners liked it."

Finally, after so many years, "brown and rough" has finally become a trend in the local market. They are now able to sell gift wrappers, scrapbooks, boxes and other crafts through a leading bookstore.

PINOY/ D4





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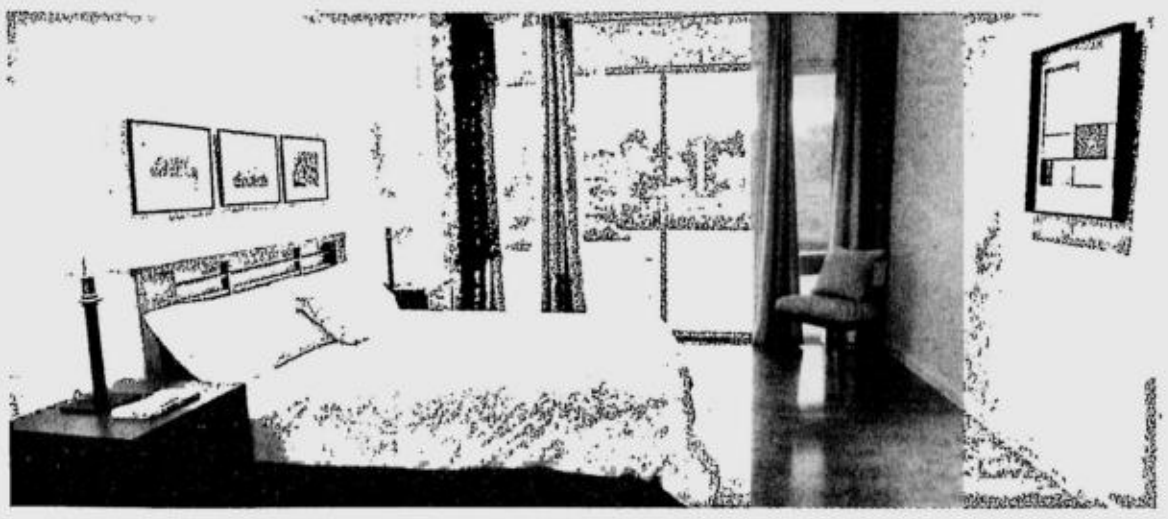
ALL THIS SPACE

FOR A LOT LESS. RIGHT IN THE HEART OF ALABANG.



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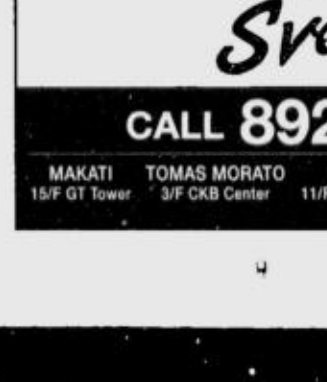
Hairloss is Devastating for Women



People are not used to seeing bald women. It doesn't happen as often compared to men. But when women are afflicted by extreme hair loss, the misery, mockery and embarrassment take their toll -- other women cannot relate to the problem. Svenson's **Non-Invasive Advanced Hair Treatments** restore your hair's natural lush and thickness. Our safe and effective hair recovery system gives you a fuller hair that you can style any way you want to bring back your younger, healthier look.

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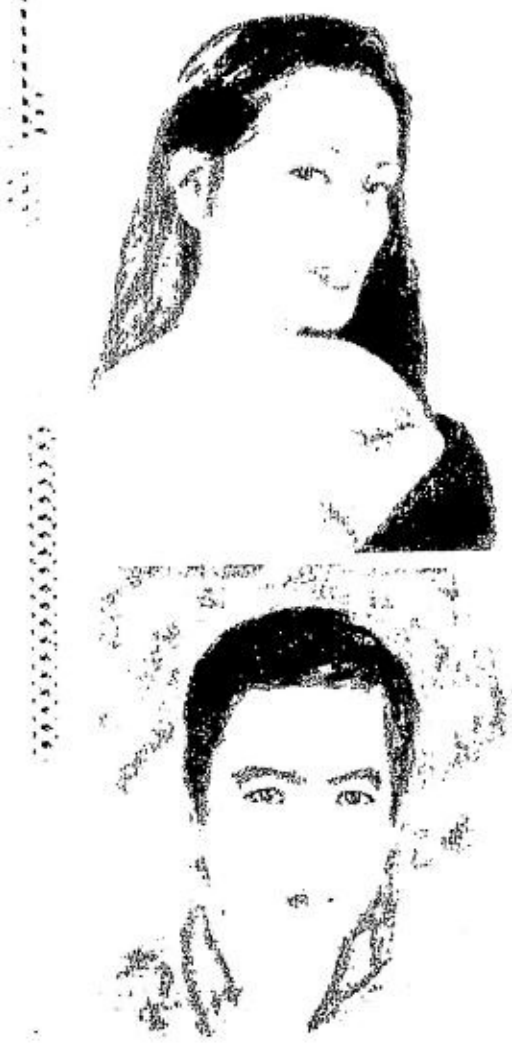
Deep passion for portraiture

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor



PORTRAITS by Rellie Liwag: (top) Former Mutya ng Pilipinas Carolyn Masibay; (above) the artist's hubby, Mel Liwag

WE HAVE LATELY SEEN A SURGE OF activity in portraiture. But while many are called, as they say, only a few are chosen.

One artist who has pursued portraiture with abiding faith and unrelenting passion is Rellie Liwag, who, since completing her stint at the Art Students League in New York, has been getting a large number of commissions.

Liwag draws and paints various subjects without letup, be they nubile nymphets, obese matrons, narcissistic hunks, midgets, or, as the occasion demands, ordinary people with extraordinary qualities.

To be sure, the artist does not rely on the proverbial Midas touch so she can define the facial terrain with genuine artistic fealty. With a life so rich and infinitely varied as hers (she has lived abroad for 18 years, raised a family with her husband Mel by doing a variety of jobs, and, later, turning to art at the prime of her life), she has gotten accustomed to the ways of the rich and the powerful, the struggling and the successful, the chi-chi crowd, who are now hankering for a representation of their image to adorn their homes and offices.

No wonder, with her flair for seeing through the subject, mainly by rendering their life-like image, Liwag's fame has grown, as well as her clientele.

Though she has made headway simply by looking deep into her subjects and studying a blowup photograph of them, she leaves a lot of room for her brush to take over and do wonders. She has developed a remarkable facility in painting the eyes, which, she admits, is among the most difficult to paint, the litmus test of the true portraitist.

But Liwag still finds time to work on other subjects, such as women and children, landscapes, conveniently switching from pastel to acrylic, and integrating her skills in the canvas of life.

She is personally challenged by more complex compositions and is seriously working on her canvases in preparation for her first solo, which she calls "Faces, Bodies and Places."

And as a newly inducted member of the Portrait Society of America, Liwag is making plans for the group's annual convention in May next year, after which it will be back to school at the Art Students League in New York, where she is all set to enroll in another course.

SELF-PORTRAIT by Joey Ibay

MOTHER Regine Panlilio Samson with baby Vito Antonio

Ibay

Another dedicated portrait artist, Joey Ibay, has just concluded his third solo, "People I Know," at Galerie Astra on N. Garcia, Bel-Air, Makati.

It was a radically divergent show as compared to his last called "Body Language," where his portraits revealed a great deal of intolerable pain and anguish. Painted in the manner of Lucian Freud, the subjects were a harrowing gallery of human turmoil evinced by expressions of paranoia, fear, alienation, doubt and disgust.

In the current show, Ibay has chosen to paint familiar faces—those of his peers (National Artist BenCab, long-time business associate and fellow painter Lydia Velasco, advertising colleague and painter Edwin Wilwayco, critic Cid Reyes are among those easily recognizable).

Ibay's expressionist way with the brush evokes a sense of casual intimacy with his subjects, who are shown to be indulging in some fleeting moments of friendly, intimate gaze into the viewer's eyes. Indeed, the paintings speak volumes of moods and range of emotions, mainly through the subjects' eyes.

Regal, for instance, is Velasco's imperial pose in one portrait, which comes complete with her trademark pursed lips and arched eyebrows.

Reyes is captured in his usual contemplative gaze, with fingers furrowed deep into his temple. Jose Tence Ruiz reveals a wide-eyed curiosity simply by holding a rim of his eyeglasses and staring right to the viewer.

And, capping it all, there is Joey Ibay himself, looking like one of the Three Wise Men, locks and moustache turned completely white, his hand cupped on his chin, a Zen-like stare that bares his face as though it was his very soul.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

VISUAL ARTS

'Trese Estilo' at Heritage

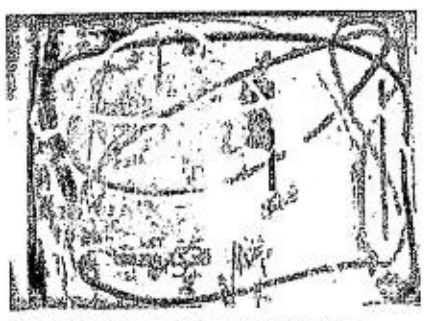
"Trese Estilo," a group exhibit, opens Aug. 12 at the Heritage Art Gallery (4/F, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong). It features Menchu Arandilla, Angel Cacnio, Ferdie Cacnio, Elmer Gernale, Rudolf Gonzales, Julius Limpe, Jun Martinez, Nards Miranda, Al Perez, Loreto Racuya, Ton Raymundo, Fernando Sena and Victor Wood. The exhibit will run until Aug. 22.

Women artists at Art Center

Ongoing at the Art Center of SM Megamall (4/F, Bldg. A) is "Girls Will Not Be Girls" as curated by Nilo Ilarde. Organized by the Finale Art Gallery, the exhibit features top female artists Annie Cabigting, Lyra Garcellano, Nona Garcia, Geraldine Javier, Lui Medina and Roma Valles. Overwhelming in scope, vast in temperament and risky in its undertakings, the show embraces contemporary themes of solitude, sexuality and selfhood in relation to a world at once familiar and alienating. "Girls Will Not Be Girls" runs until Aug. 15. Call 6342411.

Valdizno at Mag:Net

Mag:net Gallery ABS (The Loop, ELJ Center, ABS-CBN compound, Mother Ignacia Avenue and Eugenio Lopez Street, QC)



"DRAGON Fly," by Trek Valdizno

"REDLINE," by Rock Drilon

features Trek Valdizno in "Reductio ad Absurdum," Aug. 8-30. The title refers to the perfunctory exercise of painting, showing spirals flowing across and blending wity marbled patterns. Call 4100995 or email magnetplus@gmail.com or visit magnet.com.ph.

Drilon, Pacquing et al. in Paseo

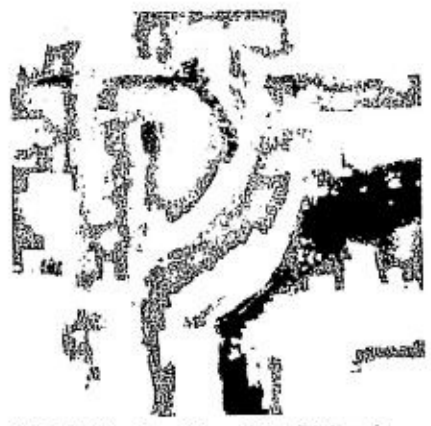
"Practice Must Collapse 5," a group exhibit by Ronald Anading, Felix Bacolor, Rock Drilon, Bernardo Pacquing and Popo San Pascual, will be on view Aug. 10-31, at Mag:net Gallery Paseo in Makati.

Bacolor's "Oil and Canvas" conceptualizes a tongue-in-cheek reference to the traditional artistic medium of oil on canvas. Anading's large-scale painting is done in cement on board. San Pascual's "Safari" fills the predominantly blue canvas space with silhouettes of animals, such as horses, ostriches and hyenas. Pacquing shows works from his two-year stay in Malaysia while Drilon will present a large painting done recently.

Mag:net Paseo is at Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas and Sedeno Street, Makati City. Call 8177895 or email magnetplus@gmail.com or visit magnet.com.ph

Tuazon at Mezzanine

Mezzanine features artist Richard Tuazon in "Plein de l' Esprit," until Aug. 31. Tuazon's paintings revolve around the theme "wine." The Mezzanine is inside the



"RED Wine in a Glass," by Richard Tuazon

Coltrans Compound along Tramo Street in Pasay City. Young artists who want to showcase their works may contact Larizza Mallare (Mezzanine) at 8515872.

Lecture at Lopez

Lopez Museum presents "Stories about Preserving Cultural Heritage" on Aug. 12, 2-4 p.m., at the Lopez Library. Architect Paulo Alcazaren will be the speaker. His talk will focus on the basics of architectural photography using a digital camera. Call 6312417.

Major book sale

POWERBOOKS SPECIALTY STORE IS having a big book blowout for avid Filipino readers with The PowerBooks Powersale.

All books will be included in the sale, with discounts easily identifiable to customers through color-coded stickers. Visit the nearest PowerBooks branch until Aug. 31 to enjoy up to 70 percent off on all books.

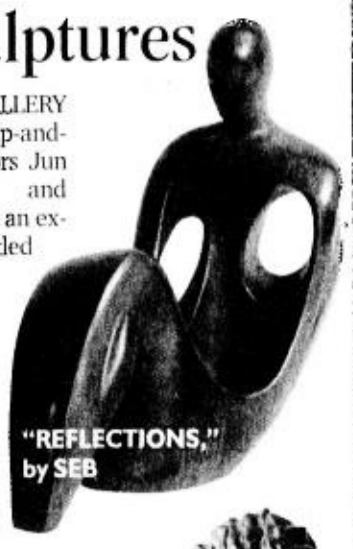
You can even get a PowerBooks metal bookmark to accompany your reading spree. Just present P2,500 worth of purchase receipts or P2,000 worth for Powercard and Powercard Plus holders at the cashier (for single receipt purchases) or the customer service counter (for accumulated receipts) to claim your premium item.

PowerBooks Specialty Store has branches at Greenbelt 4 (7576428 to 29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang Town Center (8505662 to 63), Glorietta 3 (7527067), Shangri-La (638-0024), Robinsons Place Ermita (5233334) and Mall of Asia (5560244).

"PANIC," by Gepte

Group show of sculptures

ARTASIA GALLERY introduces up-and-coming sculptors Jun Vicaldo, SEB and Nonoy Gepte in an exhibition titled "Sculptural Serendipity." The exhibition opens 7 p.m., Aug. 8, at Artwalk, 4/L, SM Megamall Bldg. A.



"REFLECTIONS," by SEB

"SIESTA," by Jun Vicaldo

The title refers to the remarkable circumstances under which Vicaldo, SEB and Gepte met. The three artists initially got together to explore the possibility of using their talents in setting up an export business. But in due time, they recognized that their passion lay in creating original works of fine art.

"Sculptural Serendipity" showcases a wide range of styles expertly rendered by each artist. SEB interprets his figures in a very modern, abstracted style with emphasis on form and negative space. Gepte displays remarkable classical skill with his beautifully rendered nudes.

Equally impressive are Vicaldo's classical works with a contemporary touch, no doubt one of the results of his apprenticeship with National Artist Napoleon Abueva.

Call 6345945.

"RESPITE," by Nonoy Gepte

"FLORAL Bloom," by SEB

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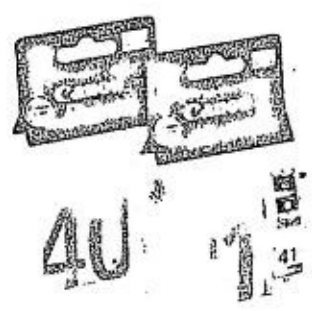

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A Test and its Rewards

What makes smoking so pleasurable is that the rewards are immediate, while the serious consequences become evident only after some time has passed. After all, it's hard to kick a habit that makes you feel good and has few noticeable immediate side effects. It is a well established fact that cigarette smoke contains over 4,000 substances and toxins - 60 of which can cause cancer. But what will it matter if you can't see any of them?

Now Nicorette (nicotine gum), Pfizer Consumer Healthcare's leading smoking cessation therapy, is changing all that. Because for the first time ever, it's bringing the Smokerlyzer® to the Philippines and inviting smokers who want to quit to try it for free.

But what exactly does the Smokerlyzer® do? It measures the amount of the toxic carbon monoxide (CO) that is accumulated in your body from the cigarette smoke you inhale. Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless and tasteless gas which is a byproduct of incomplete combustion and is found in car exhaust fumes, fires and cigarette smoke. Exposure to too much carbon monoxide is a health hazard and extra care must be taken to avoid it. The Smokerlyzer® will give you an idea of how much of this toxic gas is in your system. You simply breathe into a small, portable device and in the span of a few seconds, the results show up. You get immediate proof of how much carbon monoxide you have in your body.

The good news is that the amount of carbon monoxide in your system drops very quickly, provided you remain smoke free. The rewards of quitting comes within hours after your last puff and you will continue to reap the benefits as you live your new life as a non-smoker.

Your best tutor

As part of Nicorette's support program for smokers who want to beat the habit, Pfizer has set up special Nicorette stations in 13 major Mercury Drug branches in Glorietta, Greenbelt 1, Greenhills Shoppesville, Scout Borromeo and Diliman in Q.C., Robinson's Galleria, Alabang Town Center, Shangri-La Plaza, Jaka Plaza at Sucat, Robinson's Place Ermita, Katipunan Loyola Heights, Market! Market!, and Power Plant Mall in Rockwell. Any smoker can approach these booths to find out if they have a low, moderate or high level of carbon monoxide in their bodies, as well as get free practical advice on how to win over their cravings. Advice can be availed of during the store's business hours from Fridays to Sundays. Beating the habit is a difficult process and smokers need all the help they can get to be successful.

What these special Nicorette stations are meant to do is give smokers the support and encouragement they need to break away from their dependence on cigarettes. Nicorette is one of the best allies to have when one wants to give up the habit. Nicotine gum is one form of Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT), which has helped millions of smokers break free from their addiction. With Nicorette, the odds are strongly in your favor, because it's been proven to double one's chances of quitting for good when combined with willpower.

The right technique

What makes Nicorette gum so safe and effective is that it gives your body the nicotine it needs in controlled amounts. Your cravings and withdrawal symptoms are diminished, but without exposing yourself to the harmful disease- and cancer-causing toxins and gases found in cigarettes.

But to make the most out of the gum, you've got to use the chew and park technique:

(1) Chew on the gum when the urge to smoke hits you. This breaks up the gum and releases the nicotine into your mouth.

(2) When the taste gets strong, let the gum rest between your gums and cheek so that your body can absorb the nicotine through the lining of your mouth.

(3) Start chewing again when the taste has faded, and repeat the cycle for about half an hour before disposing of the gum properly.

As you can see, there are only three easy steps involved. But you'll be surprised by how far they can take you on the road to a smoke-free life. You'll feel the positive effects of kicking the habit soon enough. You'll be able to do more things, spend more time with the people who matter - essentially taking back all the things you've been missing out on.

Because when it comes right down to it, that's really the prize you want to set yours eyes on. It may not be as immediate as the gratification you get out of smoking, but it's the kind of satisfaction that stays with you forever. It means that you've taken the test, triumphed over it, and you are now enjoying your victory's sweet rewards.

For more information on Nicorette, you can log on to www.nicorette.com.ph

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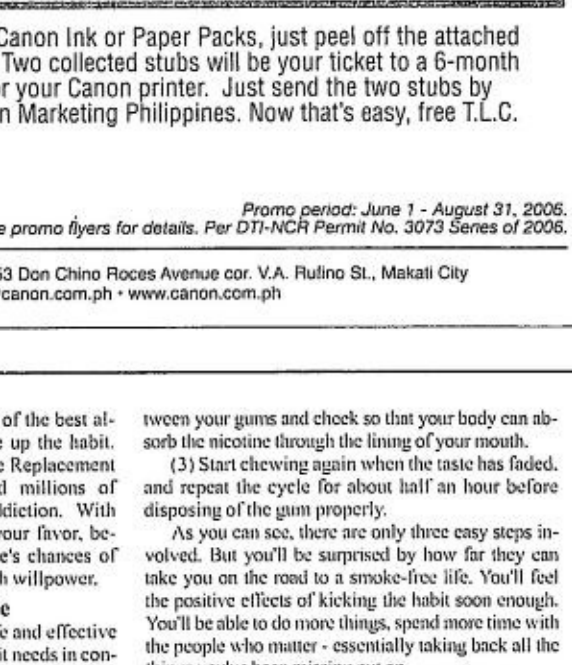
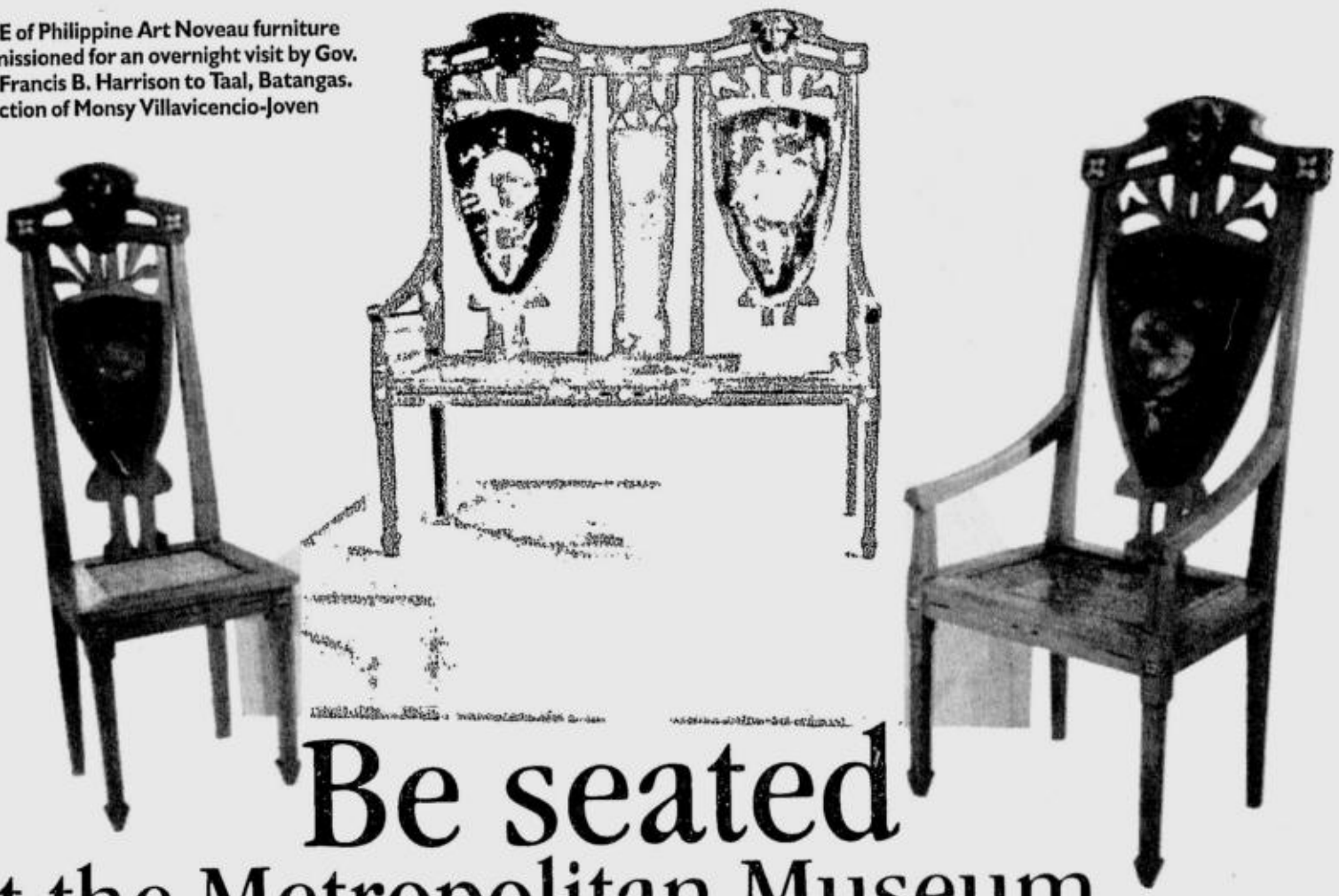


It's time to get the most out of life. Quit the easy way with the most popular Nicotine Replacement Therapy worldwide. Nicorette (nicotine) gum is a smoker's companion in the difficult process of quitting. Unlike confectionary gum, it's clinically proven to help control cravings, doubling your chances of successfully beating the addiction. Get started now and enjoy life more.

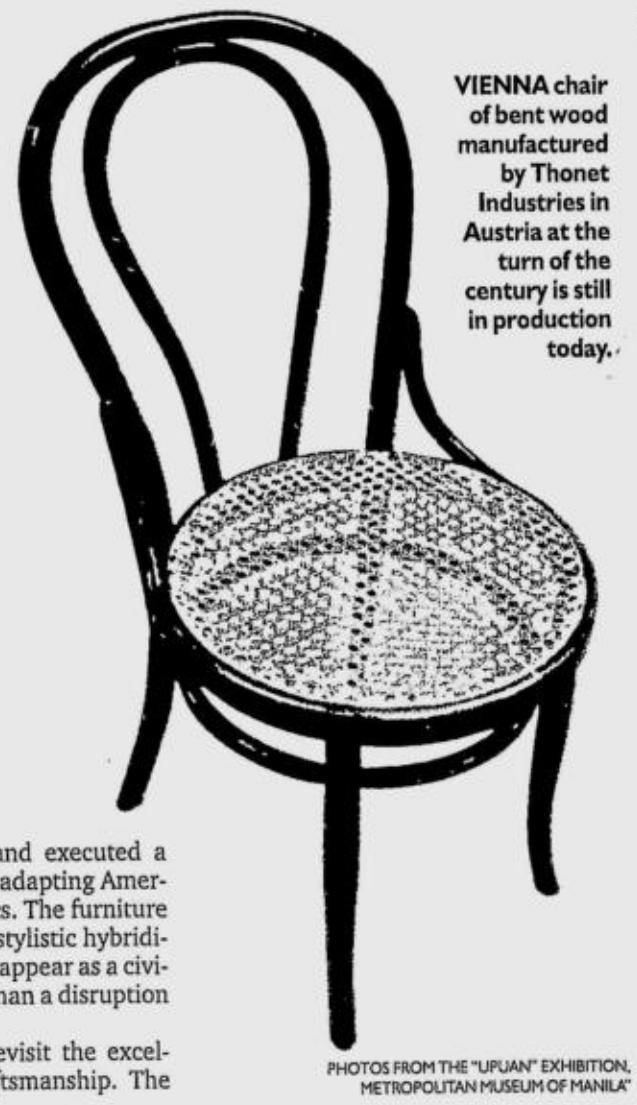
Chew and park: 1. Chew a piece of gum when you feel the urge to smoke. 2. Chew slowly until the taste becomes strong and allow nicotine to be taken in through the lining of the mouth. 3. Then stop and rest the gum between gums and cheek. 4. When the taste fades, chew a few times until the taste gets strong then rest the gum again. Requires will power. Always read label. Ask your pharmacist and doctor for advice. Visit the Nicorette booth and www.nicorette.com.ph. Available without prescription only at mercury drug



SUITE of Philippine Art Noveau furniture commissioned for an overnight visit by Gov. Gen. Francis B. Harrison to Taal, Batangas. Collection of Monsy Villavicencio-Joven

Be seated at the Metropolitan Museum

Chairs go beyond their function. They are presented as social commentary



VIENNA chair of bent wood manufactured by Thonet Industries in Austria at the turn of the century is still in production today.

PHOTOS FROM THE "UPUAN" EXHIBITION, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF MANILA

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

AN OUTSTANDING SERIES OF exhibitions illustrating the development of Philippine character over generations marks the tenure of Ino Manalo as director of the Metropolitan Museum of Manila. His exhibition program presents the total Philippine-culture spectrum, going beyond the stereotypical visual-arts window to include objects of daily life.

Manalo uses ordinary objects to portray Philippine culture, everyday things such as baskets, carving, clothing, folk art, religious icons, old photos and commonplace stuff usually taken for granted by most Filipinos whose daily lives are surrounded by what they perceive as ordinary.

Whatever its origin, an object tells a story, whether it be an heirloom or an export overrun T-shirt manufactured in the past week.

Manalo's sharp vision transforms ordinary objects into extraordinary storytelling icons that powerfully express attitudes, habits and beliefs of Filipinos, which makes viewers return to shared roots.

Manalo has organized exhibits that bring out our shared Philippine roots. He has presented all facets of Boholano culture from rare Spanish colonial church treasures through traditional basketry and craft items of recent design manufactured for the export market.

He has taken Metropolitan viewers on an extensive walk through Quiapo, highlighting the quarter's treasures, from its surviving *bahay-na-bato* and their illustrious residents to neighborhood minutiae like the *anting-anting* sold outside Quiapo church.

Exhibiting everyday stuff removes culture from wrongly perceived ivory-tower altitudes, returning it to earth, and bringing culture back to the people where it rightfully belongs.

The present exhibition at the Met sees how Philippine life evolved through the American colonial era by showing different chairs that people sat on during those days. This is an unusual journey and a visual treat not to be missed.

At the "Upuan" exhibit, chairs go beyond their function. They are presented as social commentary.

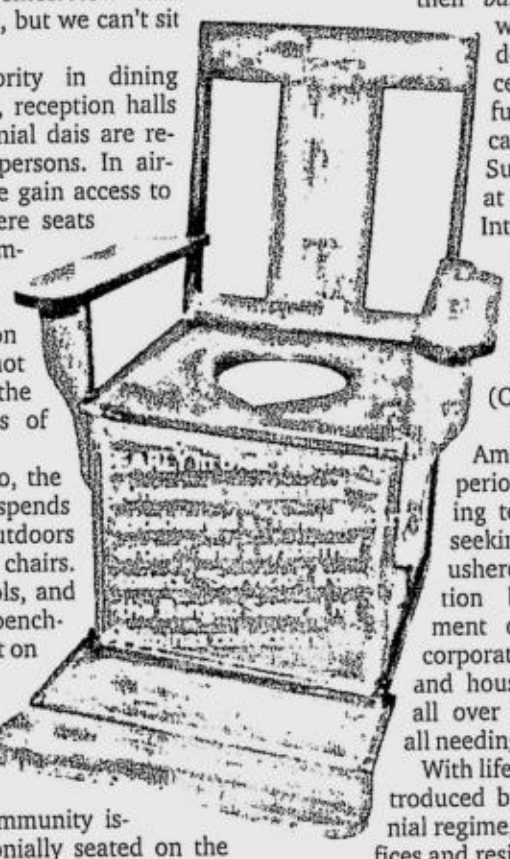
"For many centuries," says the exhibit catalogue text, "chairs were articles of state and dignity rather than items of ordinary use. They have their origin in the hierarchic society of medieval Europe, where only the king sat on chairs."

Ordinary folk of the time were lucky to have a bench or stool to sit on. The world has turned full circle since. Now we all have chairs to sit on, but we can't sit on all of them.

Chairs of authority in dining rooms, boardrooms, reception halls and on the ceremonial dais are restricted to special persons. In airports, special people gain access to airline lounges where seats are much more comfortable than outside, where ordinary folk still sit on ordinary chairs, not much change from the stools and benches of medieval days.

The rural Filipino, the exhibit points out, spends most of his day outdoors with little need for chairs. Rocks serve as stools, and branches become benches. Others just squat on the ground.

Squatting was not for all. Generations of Cordillera elders have discussed community issues while ceremonially seated on the honored stone seats of the circular *dapay*. Lowland bishops and priests have ornate seats on cathedral altars. Power comes with privilege and special seating.



Rural people traditionally sit or squat under the shade of their *bahay-na-nipa* to cool off from the hot sun. Inside their houses, there is a minimum of furniture since they live in a one-room, multipurpose space. Since sleeping, cooking and eating happen within the same area, too much furniture restricts movement and flexibility.

When the Spanish moved people from rural to urban areas, "a more indoor kind of living and a new social order" developed, which "increased the chances as well as the need of families to socially interact with each other within the confines of their residences to enhance their prestige and power.

"Such interaction required showing off the elegant design and grandeur of their *bahay-na-bato* as well as the splendor and magnificence of their furniture," the catalogue says. Such can be seen at Casa Manila in Intramuros, Casa Gorordo in Cebu and the Museo De La Salle in Dasmariñas (Cavite).

During the American colonial period, people flocking to urban centers seeking employment ushered in a construction boom. Government offices, schools, corporate structures, and houses rose quickly all over the Philippines, all needing furniture.

With lifestyle changes introduced by the new colonial regime, areas within offices and residences compartmentalized into smaller, separate spaces, requiring a new range of specialized furniture for living or dining rooms, bedrooms, offices, schools.

Craftsmen designed and executed a variety of new furniture, adapting American designs to the tropics. The furniture of the era demonstrate "stylistic hybridity... making colonialism appear as a civilizing continuity rather than a disruption of a native civilization."

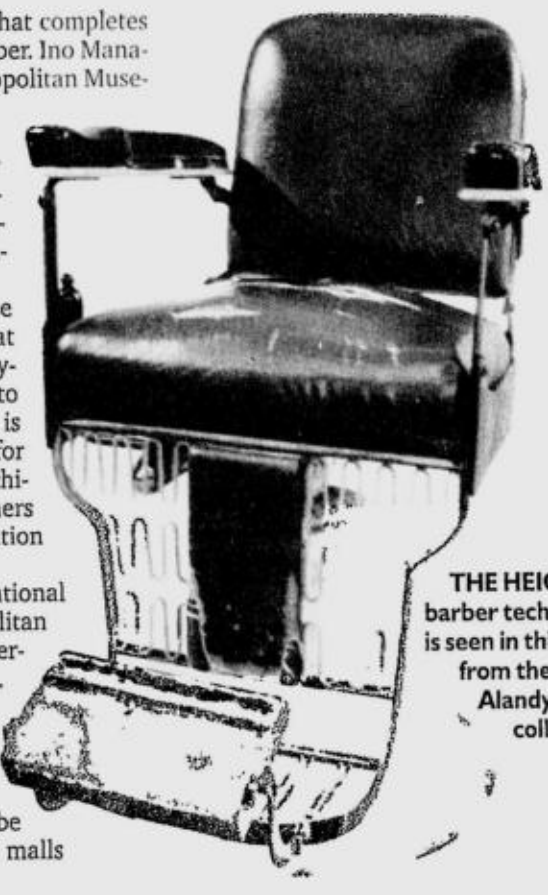
Go see "Upuan" to revisit the excellence of Philippine craftsmanship. The exhibit runs until Sept. 9.

It is not only "Upuan" that completes its museum run in September. Ino Manalo ends his tenure as Metropolitan Museum director as well.

Ino deserves a solid round of appreciation for his pioneering determination in telling the Philippine story through the culture of the everyday.

"Upuan" is one of those rare Manila exhibits that expand the horizons of anyone who takes the time to experience it. The exhibit is especially enlightening for practicing or student architects and interior designers needing to take inspiration from Philippine tradition.

Interesting and educational as they may be, Metropolitan Museum exhibits are underutilized opportunities. More people should go to see them, but then the Filipino is notoriously not a museum-going individual. Maybe exhibits should go to the malls to reach more people.



THE HEIGHT of barber technology is seen in this chair from the Dondi Alandy Silang collection.

Heritage watch

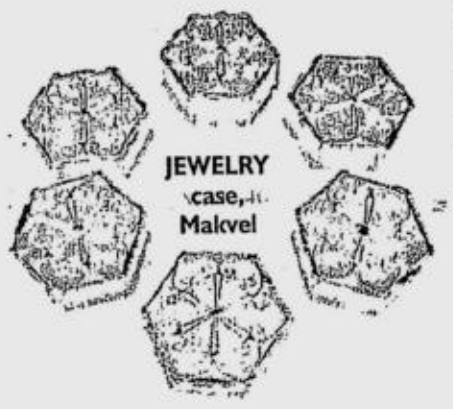
"Bid for Heritage" is the annual art and design auction organized by the Heritage Conservation Society. It takes place Aug. 20, 4 p.m., at The Loft, Rockwell Drive, Makati.

Proceeds benefit the projects of the Heritage Conservation Society, particularly the HCS-DepEd Heritage Schoolhouse Restoration Program, which has completed restoration of American-period schoolhouses in Bacolod, Baguio and San Fernando, Pampanga.

In 2006-07, buildings in Teachers Camp, Baguio, and public schools in Zamboanga and Davao will be restored by the project.

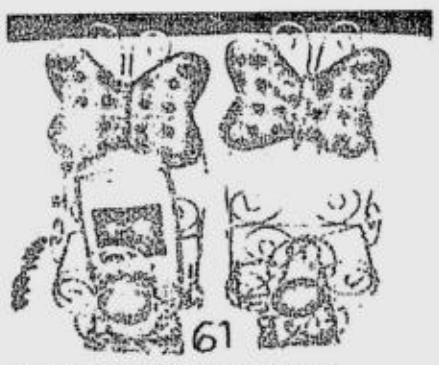
Tickets for "Bid for Heritage" are available at the HCS Secretariat at Museo Pambata, Roxas Boulevard. Call 5212239 or 5222497.

E-mail the author at pride.place @gmail.com



JEWELRY case, Makvel

CAPIZ lamp, Makvel



CELLPHONE holders, Makvel

Pinoy arts and crafts fight back

From page D1

Accessories

Annigail Espinosa of Annigail Craft Enterprise, meanwhile, says it's the unique design of her accessories that keeps her small business a success.

"I don't do the same designs twice so all my buyers can be assured that each piece is unique and one-of-a-kind," says Espinosa.

Although she says she has no background in fine arts, she has a knack for combining colors.

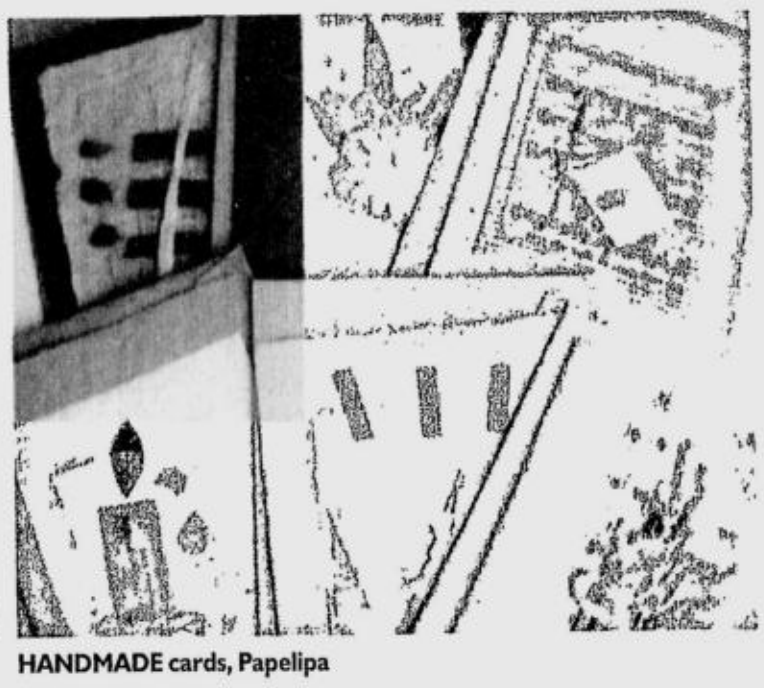
NOVELTY items, Makvel

These entrepreneurs have managed to get through most of the problems in business through ingenuity coupled with hard work and a large dose of passion. They, along with other 200 exhibitors, will be presenting their products in a trade fair at SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Most of their products are for export products and available only to foreign buyers.

"My lamps are available in some high-end malls. But people will get it cheaper if they buy it directly from me," says Luzano.

The 10th Buy Pinoy Exporters Trade Fair opens on Aug. 9-13, in Megatrade Hall 1, while the 11th Mindanao Trade Expo starts tomorrow and runs until Aug. 13, in Megatrade Hall 2.



HANDMADE cards, Papelipa

Pinoy artists take part in Asian fest

TWO SCULPTORS AND NINE painters represent the Philippines in the 21st Asian International Art Exhibition (AIAE) at the Singapore Art Museum in the tiger state of Singapore, which began July 19 and runs until Aug. 13.

Newly declared National Artist Bencab leads the Philippine delegation with his acrylic "Ang Liham."

AIAE Philippine committee members Ramon Orlina, Susan Fetalvero-Roces, Pandy Aviado and Sid Gomez Hildawa also submit new works for the 2006 AIAE, as well as invited members James Gabito, Jevijoe Vitug, Lydia Velasco, Clairelyn Uy, Winner Jumalon and Jun Vicaldo.

The themes may vary but "there is a distinctive narrative quality in the works" of Filipino artists in this year's AIAE, Juaniyo Arcellana writes in the essay for the exhibition catalogue.

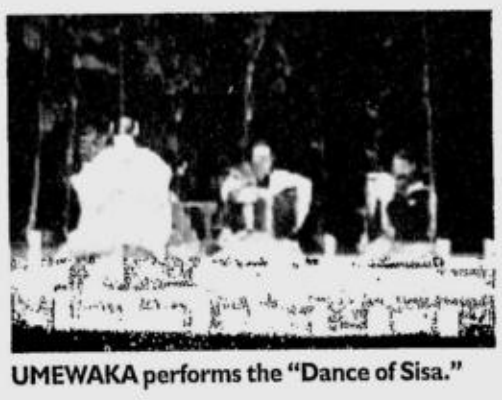
"There is a story, stories even, independent of the artist, hiding here somewhere," he says

The Philippine participation is sponsored and supported by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Directories Philippines Corporation, Pioneer Insurance, Lane Moving and Storage, Ayala Museum and GMA 7.

The Singapore exhibit follows the successful staging of the 20th edition of the art show that ran from November 2005-March 2006 at the Ayala Museum. The Philippine Committee, Asian Artists Inc. contributed a record number of participating artists and played host to delegates from 10 Asian countries.

The annual exhibit fosters a continuing fellowship and visual dialogue among artists, sculptors, printmakers in the Asian continent, bridging gaps and constantly breaking barriers on the regional art scene.

KIKUJIRO Inoue, Kyogen master



UMEWAKA performs the "Dance of Sisa."

NOH master for flute Jiro Fujita conducts training-rehearsal at the UP College of Music with Jina Umali translating.

Unique Noh adaptation of 'Sisa' to be staged

THE 600-YEAR-OLD NOH THEAter tradition of Japan was performed by six Japanese Noh masters with Filipinos as part of the commemorative ceremony of the Philippines-Japan Friendship Day.

Hosted by the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Philippines and the Embassy of Japan, the joint performance introduced a new form of collaboration between the two countries, deepening their friendship.

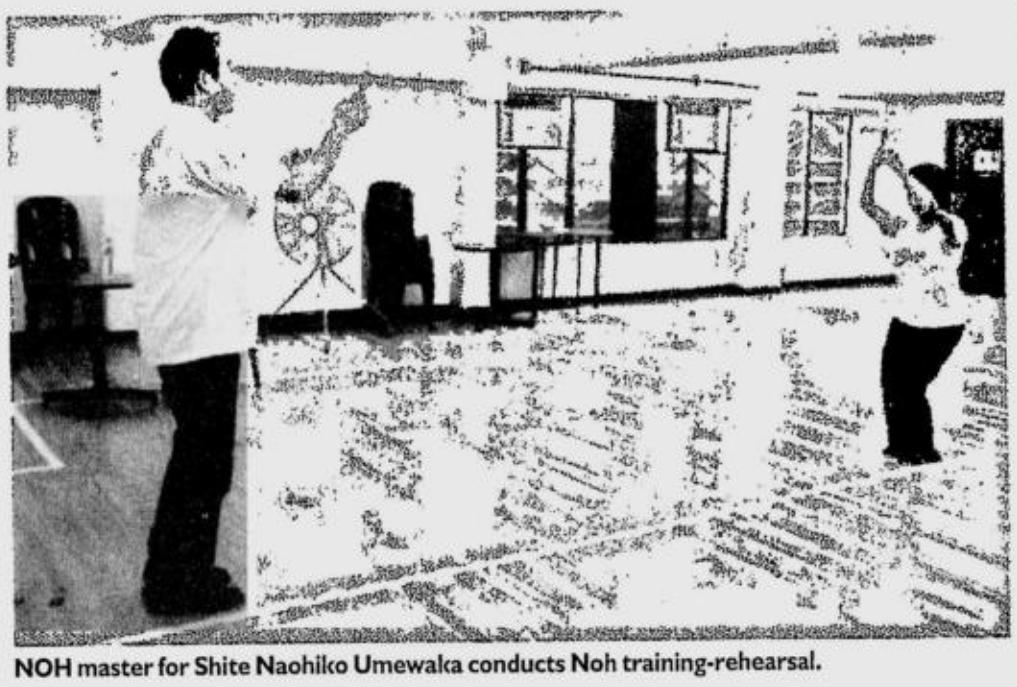
The Noh masters performed with students and artists of the University of the Philippines Diliman in "Okina/Dance of Sisa," recently at the Carlos P. Romulo Auditorium, RCBC Plaza. The show marked 50 years of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Philippines.

Naohiko Umewaka, Ph.D., Noh master for Shite (main character) and associate professor of the Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, led the Japanese Noh masters. A Japan Foundation visiting professor for Japan Studies of the UP Center for International Studies, he has been holding intensive Noh training-rehearsal for Filipinos, the first of its kind in the country and probably in the world.

Umewaka was joined by his fellow masters: Yuichi Inoue, Kyogen master; Jiro Fujita Noh master for Nohkan (flute); Kosuke Terasawa, Noh master for Shite (main character); Shunichiro Hisada, Noh master for Kotsuzumi (shoulder drum) and Shigeji Omura, Noh master for Otsuzumi (hip drum) and the UP-CIS Noh Theater Ensemble.

Noh is a masked theatrical form which combines elements of dance, drama, music and poetry into one highly aesthetic performance.

Noh developed as a distinct theatrical form in the 14th century during the Muromachi Period (1336-1568), making it the oldest extant professional theater in the world.



NOH master for Shite Naohiko Umewaka conducts Noh training-rehearsal.

Nohgaku—the dual art of Noh and Kyogen—was proclaimed by Unesco a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in 2001.

Okina, revered as the oldest prototype of Noh, consists of dances, said to have been in existence in the 10th century, which are designed to win the help of the gods in obtaining peace and prosperity in the land and long life for the people.

"Dance of Sisa" was taken from "Ang Paglalakbay ni Sisa: Isang Noh sa Laguna," by Amelia Lapena Bonifacio, professor emeritus of UP Diliman. It's a reinterpretation as a Noh play of Jose Rizal's Sisa character from the novel "Noli Me Tangere."

"Okina/Dance of Sisa" was supported by the Agency of Cultural Affairs of Japan, Japan Foundation, Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines Inc., Japanese Association of Manila, Japan Airlines, Shizuoka University of Art and Culture, Office of Sen. Panfilo Lacson, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, Embassy of the Philippines in Japan and the Embassy of Japan in the Philippines.

Conceived and produced by Amparo Adelina C. Umali of the UP Center for International Studies and directed by Noh master Umewaka, "Okina/Dance of Sisa" will have a repeat performance by an all-Filipino cast at the UP Diliman Theater on Aug. 11 at 7 p.m. and on Aug. 12-13 at 3 p.m. Call 4267573.

BALLET Philippines company members

'All That Jazz' from Ballet Philippines

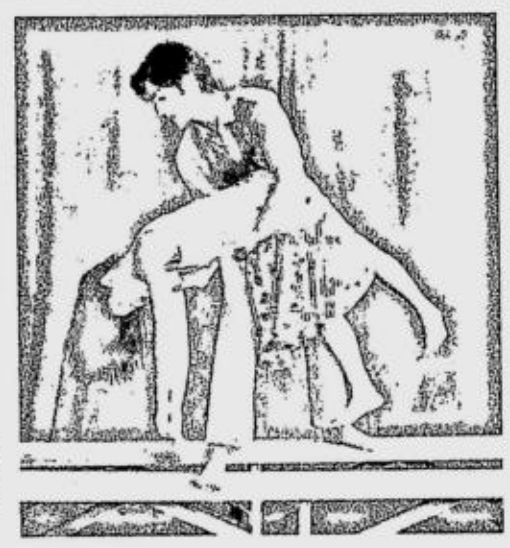
BALLET PHILIPPINES, ON ITS 37th season, presents "All That Jazz" on Aug. 11 (8 p.m., Gala Night), 12 (2 p.m. and 8 p.m.) and 13 (3 p.m.) at the CCP Main Theater.

"All That Jazz" is a dance extravaganza performed to jazz classics such as George Gershwin's well-loved "Rhapsody in Blue," "The Man I Love," "Summer Time," and "I Love You, Porgy," and the music of legendary jazz singers such as Ella Fitzgerald, Lou Rawls and Louie Armstrong, as inspirations for the choreography.

Adding star wattage to the show are the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra, Hotlegs, Reuben Laurente, Bituin Escalante and Pinky Marquez.

The Essenses Foundation and Metro Pacific Corporation support Ballet Philippines' "All That Jazz."

Call 5511003, 5510221 or 8326011, or visit www.ballet.com.ph



BP DANCERS Angel Gabriel and Carissa Adea

Tanghalang Pilipino mounts 'Orfeo sa Impiyerno'

TO OPEN ITS 20TH SEASON, TANGHALANG Pilipino presents "Orfeo sa Impiyerno," a Filipino translation of Tennessee Williams' drama "Orpheus Descending."

Directed by Columbia University scholar José Estrella, the production will run at the Tanghalang Aurelio Tolentino (CCP Little Theater) from Aug. 11-27, with matinee shows at 3 p.m. (Saturdays and Sundays) and evening performances at 8 p.m. (Fridays and Saturdays).

"Orfeo sa Impiyerno" is about Regina Torralba, a passionate middle-aged woman (premier theater actress Shamaine Centenera-Buencamino) with a domineering husband, Jabe (award-winning screenwriter, playwright, director and actor Mario O'Hara).

Her life alters somewhat when Val Javier's (actor for stage, TV and film Neil Ryan Sese) car breaks down outside town and he comes asking for a job in her store. The woman surrenders to the advances of the young guitar player and falls in love once again.

SHAMAINE Centenera-Buencamino and Neil Ryan Sese

The other cast members are Paolo O'Hara, Peewee O'Hara, Crispin Pineda, soprano Joscephine Gomez, Mailes Kanapi, Richard Cunanan, Tess Jamias, Wenah Nagales, Bella Barrios, Daria Herras, Marjorie Ann Lorico, Jing Dy, Randy Villarama and Bong Cabrera.

"Orfeo sa Impiyerno" was translated to Filipino by George de Jesus III.

Ricardo Cruz of the CCP Production Design Center is set designer. Lighting design is by Voltaire de Jesus; costume design by Dennis Tan; sound design by Jethro Joaquin; and Barbara Tan-Tiongco is technical director.

Call the TP office at 8323661, 8321125 locals 1620/1621 or 0920-9535381. Tickets are also available at Ticketworld outlets.

Poet Fidelito Cortez in homecoming

POET FIDELITO CORTEZ is featured in "Everyday Things: Quotidian Poetics," a special reading session at the conference hall of the Center for Creative Writing and Studies (CCWS) of the University of Santo Tomas on Aug. 10 at 4 p.m.

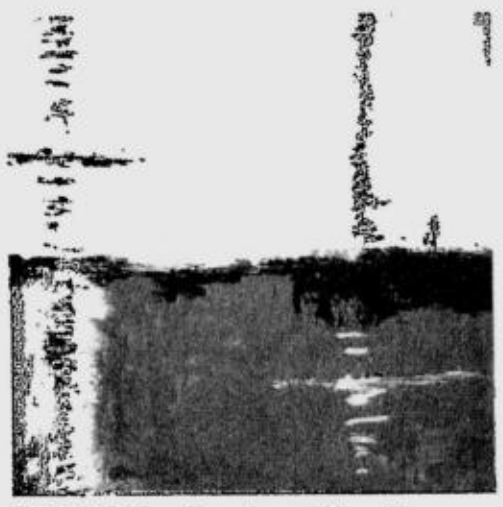
Cortez, who has been residing in the US for several years now, will read his new works. He will be formally welcomed by his friend, poet-critic Ophelia Dimalanta, director of the CCWS.

The reading is part of a lecture series on Filipino expatriate writers. Previous speakers included R. Zamora Linmark, Marianne Villanueva and Nerissa Balce.

The series is organized by the UST Department of Literature and Languages, Faculty of Arts and Letters, and Literary Society, and endowed by the Varsitarian, the official student organ of UST.

The reading is open to the public.

Camille Ver's verities



"WAITING for a Dewdrop to Sound"

"DREAMING in Technicolor"

By Jessica Jalandoni-Robillos
Contributor

FOR HER FIRST EXHIBIT, Camille Ver chose 16 phrases which she felt described her in some ways. She then turned the semantic selection into abstractions, which now comprise "Climb," on view at Gallery Nine in Megamall (tel. 6877302).

Among the lines are lyrics of songs. "Ingenue" is from the sensual tune "Living in Mono," which is included on the soundtrack of "Great Expectations," the latest film adaptation of Charles Dickens' novel about an artist and his obsession with a living muse.

"This World Was Never Meant for One as Beautiful as You," a line from Don McLean's "Vincent," is the title of her tribute to Van Gogh. Her art idol also inspired the piece "Gogh Figure."

The introspective approach Ver employs in her art-making complements her pieces, which may remind viewers of multicolored brainwaves or neural-response monitoring images, except she does not use neon.

It is as if her paintings were enlarged fragments of cross-section illustrations of her cranial matter, allowing audiences a peek into the inner workings of her mind.

With this body of works, Camille says she depicts "who she is, and where she is now." Though she is not unhappy, the works—and the title—show a desire to improve her life. The "climb" to betterment is indicated by the short horizontal strokes in the paintings, much like rungs on a ladder.

Though the upward steps somehow indicate the artist's ambitions, they, too, are passages of escape. With them, Ver also parlays her desire for an occasional change of space and circumstance.

Painting is one such refuge for her, yet what she longs for takes the form of horizons of varying distances on her canvases that are actually obscured landscapes and seascapes.

The citrus-yellow sky and green ground of "Waiting for a Dewdrop to Sound" is Ver's expression for her love of rain. A white vertical structure seems like a lighthouse. Notable is the oblique application of the white paint that results in the vortex-like appearance of a tornado, again an allusion to ascent.

Beyond her presentation of traits and preferences, Ver's blurry cityscapes portray a more pressing kind of ascent. Most of her pieces hint at buildings in the horizon, but they are far apart, unevenly spaced. Brought to mind are abandoned industrial facilities or remains of bombed-out cities.

"I Still Believe There Is a God," despite its starkness, is reminiscent of soot and grime, whether from industrial refuse or the aftermath of razing. It calls to mind battlements, barren expanses, and the gray of warships.

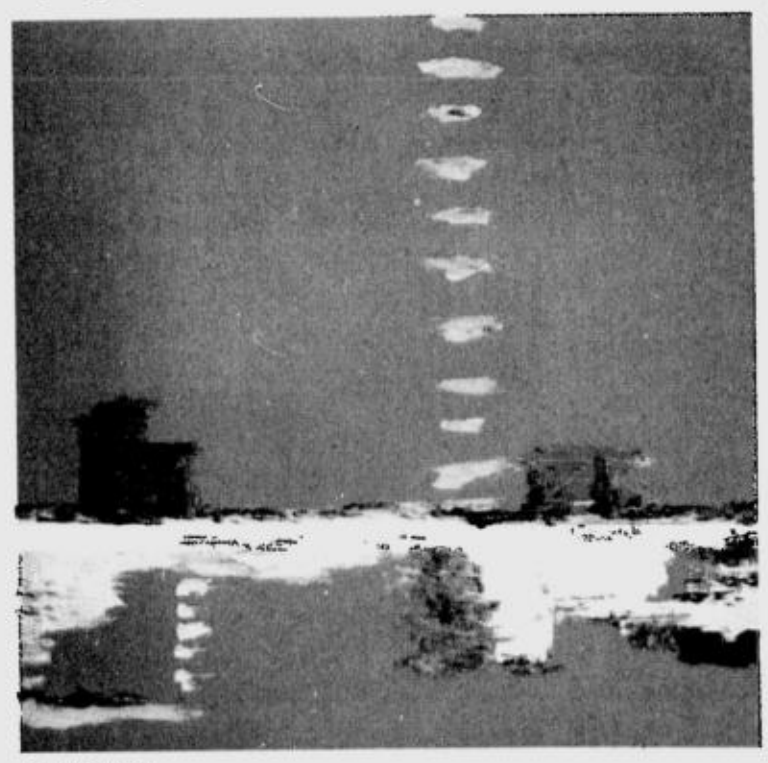
Gunmetal-gray serves as a backdrop for structures in reds and blues in "Quietly Controlled," and the steps meant for climbing may be seen as falling missiles of air offensives, with the night sky brightly lit by blasts.

"Dreaming in Technicolor" is perhaps a rendition of just precisely that, but one may also see a mid-air explosion and black clouds.

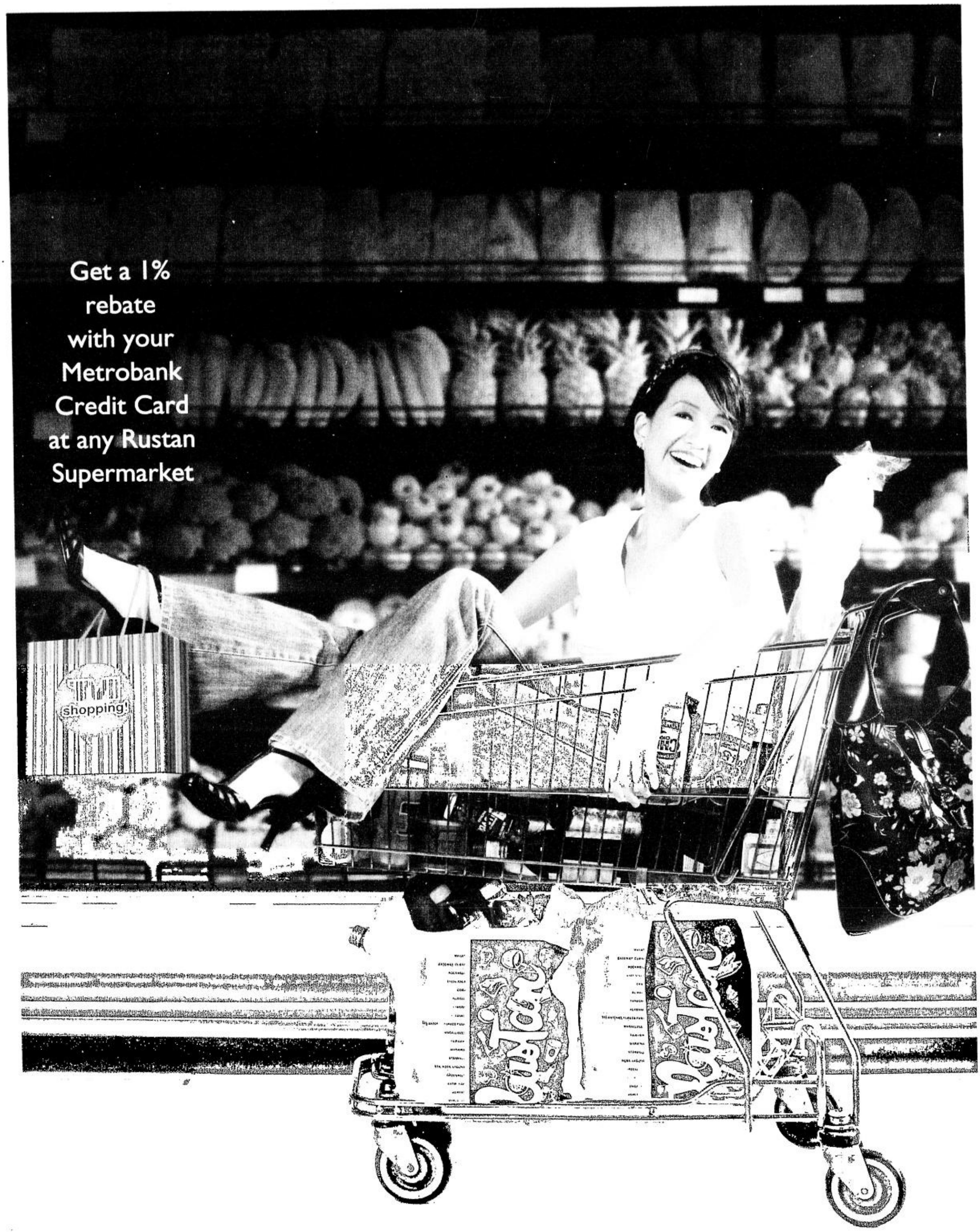
In psychological terms, veridicality is when visual perception coincides with reality. Camille Ver has thus not only shared her personal truths, she entices viewers with possible discoveries of their own.

E-mail the author at majorday@gmail.com

"QUIETLY Controlled"



"MANUEL"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KIDS sing with Denille Lou as she reads them a story.

Pretty bookworms urge kids to read

By Armin Adina

LOOKS ALONE DO NOT A BEAUty queen make. Wit, intelligence and personality also matter in determining on whose pretty head the crown should sit.

Reigning Binibining Pilipinas titlists Ana Maris Igpit and Denille Lou Valmonte know this only too well. They agree that, aside from makeup sessions and weight training, reading helped prepare them for the annual pageant last March.

The statuesque duo, both self-confessed bookworms, graced the opening of the Araneta Group of Companies' book fair at the Aurora Tower in Araneta Center, Quezon City last week. Highlight of the event was the formal turnover of book donations from Scholastic, largest publisher and distributor of children's books in the world, for the conglomerate's literacy program and library.

Ana and Denille Lou were delighted to help push Scholastic's advocacy: "Helping children around the world to read and learn."

"Instead of watching television, children should grab a book in their free time," said Ana.

Denille Lou added,. "Reading improves one's vocabulary and broaden the imagination."

Ambassadors

Meinard Cruz, Scholastic general manager, was excited about having the two as "reading ambassadors."

He explained, "Our battle cry is, 'A book in every child's hand.' The Binibining Pilipinas may help bring this campaign closer to people."

During the program, Ana and Denille Lou read stories to little wards of the Araneta Group's day care center. Ana read Keiko Kasza's "The Lucky Day," the story of a pig who outwits a fox. "I personally chose this because kids are always interested in stories with animals," she said.

The children sang with Denille Lou as she read Robert Munsch's "Love You Forever," about the bond between a mother and son.

Denille Lou competes in the Miss International pageant in Beijing, China this November. Ana will bring a book published by the Department of Tourism to be donated to the Miss World library when she competes in Warsaw, Poland on Sept. 30.

BB. PILIPINAS International Denille Lou Valmonte, left, and Bb. Pilipinas World Ana Marie Igpit, at the book fair. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

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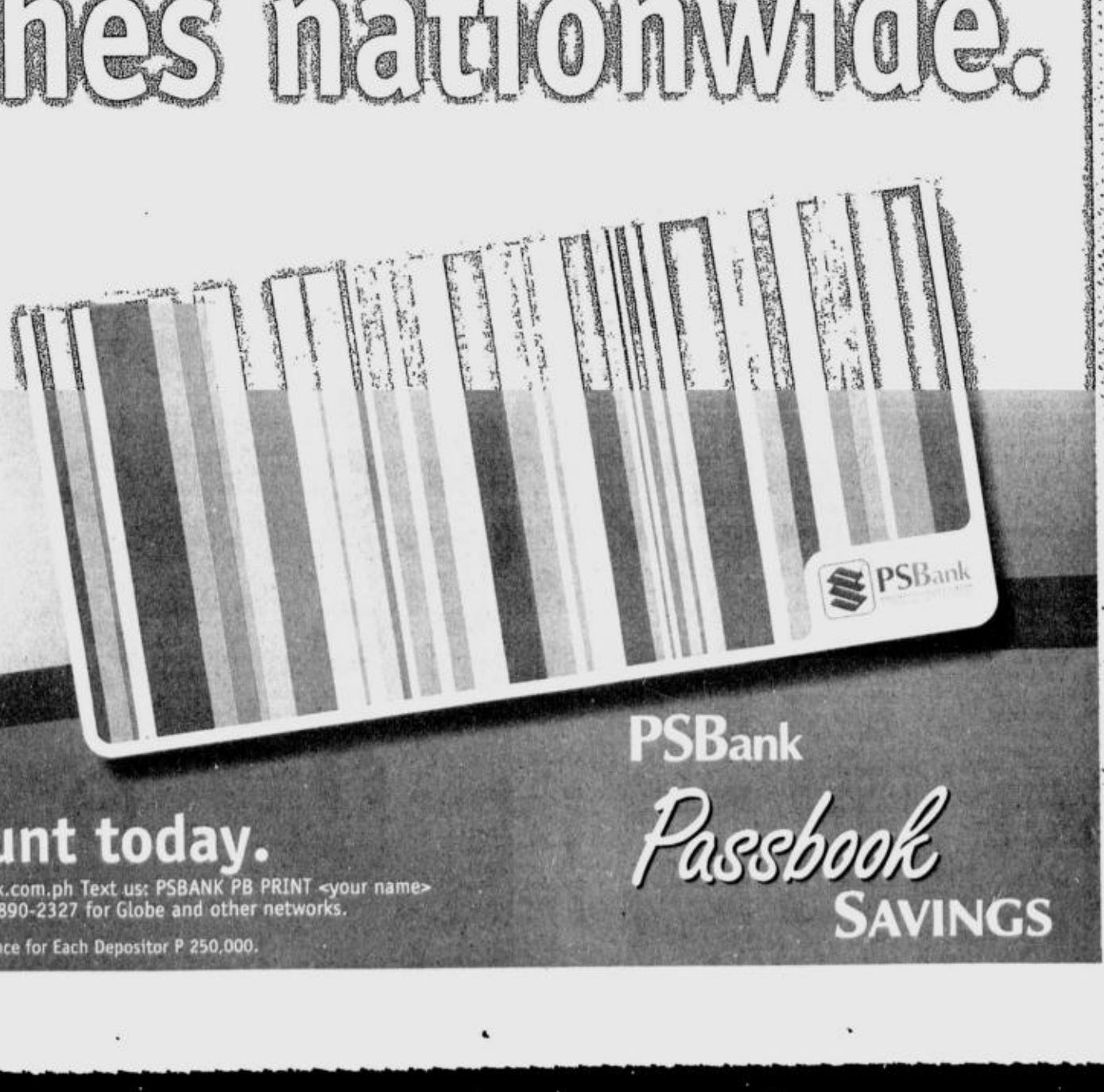

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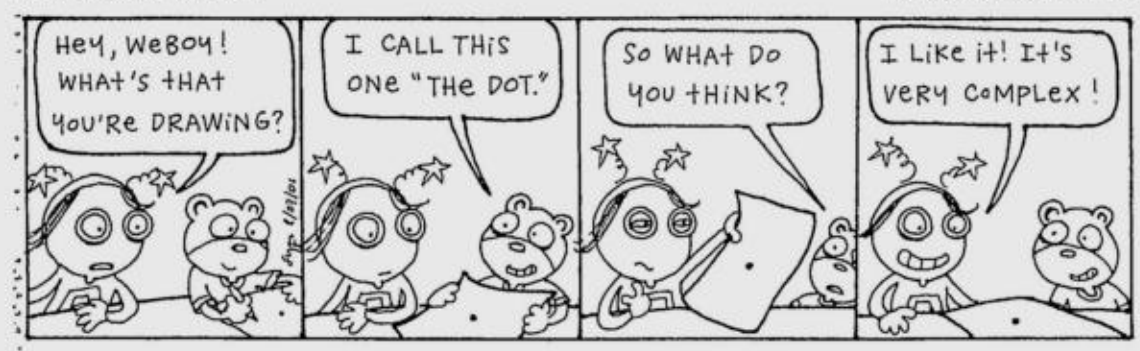

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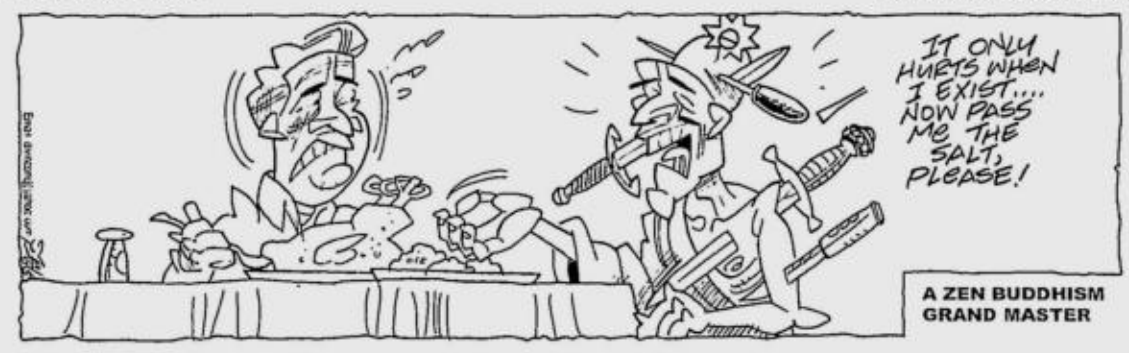

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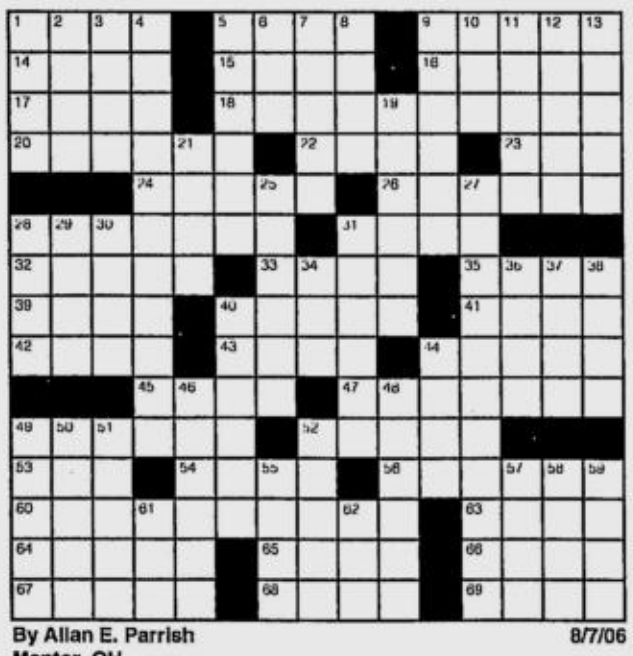

By Allan E. Parrish
Mentor, OH

8/7/06

ACROSS
1 Tyne or Tim
5 Tibetan monk
9 Falk or Fonda
14 Bug trailer?
15 Simians
16 "Guitar Town" singer Steve
17 Bantu language
18 Prince film
20 Sets out
22 Writer Dinesen
23 Alley prowler
24 Put up
26 School break
28 Shore
31 Turkey label letters
32 Heavenly headwear
33 Letterman's competition
35 Hemingway's nickname
39 Last part of "Hamlet"
40 James or Kline
41 Prayer leader of Islam
42 Order to Trigger
43 Contemporary Babylonia
44 Video game name
45 __-bitsy
47 Makes current
49 Steinway products
52 Risky situation
53 GPA part
54 Dole (out)
56 Take part (in)
60 "Diff'rent Strokes" star
63 Weaponry
64 Lott or Dilfer
65 Ballplayer Moises
66 Freezes
67 Food distribution company
68 Enlist again
69 Kiddy taboo

DOWN
1 Haagen-__
2 Border on
3 Dancer Falana
4 Carly Simon hit
5 Ran out
6 "The Simpsons" storekeeper
7 Be worthy of
8 Small vipers
9 Viewed furtively
10 Corncob
11 Minute amount
12 Inventor Howe
13 Landlord's collections
19 "The Far Side" creator
21 Mr. Speaker
25 Salad leafstalk
27 Taxable profit
28 Writer Irwin
29 For one
30 Choir voice
31 One-of-a-kind
34 Ms. Longoria
36 Latin I word
37 Whittle down
38 Writer Kingsley
40 Gave a smooch
44 Deuce follower, perhaps
46 Salad item
48 Before-the-wedding agreement, familiarly
49 International agreements
50 Tusk material
51 "__ of God"
52 U.S. family of artists
55 Skier's ride
57 Sunoco rival
58 Fed. agents
59 Exxon, once
61 GOP group
62 Promise-to-pay letters

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

H	O	C	U	S	P	O	C	U	S	■	A	R	C	O
E	X	A	S	P	E	R	A	T	E	■	G	E	A	R
L	E	S	S	E	R	A	P	E	S	■	I	F	N	I
D	N	A	■	E	S	T	S	■	S	A	L	I	N	E
■	■	■	O	D	I	E	■	S	I	M	E	N	O	N
M	O	T	H	R	A	■	S	T	O	A	■	E	N	T
A	N	I	S	E	■	S	C	E	N	T	■	D	B	A
G	E	M	■	A	P	P	E	A	S	E	■	O	A	T
I	C	E	■	D	R	I	N	K	■	U	T	I	L	E
C	A	L	■	I	O	N	E	■	T	R	O	L	L	S
C	L	I	E	N	T	S	■	M	U	L	E	■	■	■
H	O	M	A	G	E	■	M	O	P	E	■	E	M	S
A	R	I	S	■	S	T	A	T	E	V	I	S	I	T
R	I	T	E	■	T	A	T	T	L	E	T	A	L	E
M	E	S	S	■	S	C	H	O	O	L	T	I	E	S

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8/7/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're clever, humorous and highly entertaining. Nevertheless, you often deal with secret material. (You can certainly hide secrets.) You know how to use humor to make light of tense, complicated situations. Your social skills are tops. Despite your private nature, you often shock others with your frank admissions. Expect a major change this year (perhaps as significant as in 1997-98).
Birthdate of: Charlize Theron, actress; Garrison Keillor, radio host; David Duchovny, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Your duties and obligations concerning the education or care of children are a prime concern today. You want to do something that is of lasting benefit in this area.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Improvements or repairs to where you live will go well today. You're prepared to take your time in order to do the job right. (You want long-lasting results.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're giving serious thought to something today. This is a good day to strategize or to map out plans for the future. You're concerned with achieving practical results.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a good day for organizing and planning financial matters. You want to introduce more order into how you do things. You want to feel more in control.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Your energy levels are low today. Just do whatever is necessary. Do not take on new duties or responsibilities. In fact, grab a nap somewhere during the day if you can sneak it in.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): People feel a bit restrained or reserved today. Don't worry about it if you sense this when talking to friends. Everyone wants tangible, practical results for their efforts today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Don't let others discourage you today. You might feel isolated or cut off from people. This is a temporary, fleeting thing. (Gone by tomorrow.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Authority types, parents and bosses are very serious and reserved today. This is why you feel restricted by rules and obligations. (You have no other choice.)

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You don't trust new, fancy ideas or beliefs today. In fact, what you do trust are the tried-and-true ways of doing things. Traditional values have their place.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Someone's approach to sharing something with you is discouraging. You fear you might not be treated fairly. And you're probably right. Therefore, postpone this kind of transaction if you can.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Do not take it personally if you feel that others are older and reserved today. The stars tend to make everyone feel a bit withdrawn right now. Just relax.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is a good day for detailed, routine work. You don't mind doing something that is boring but necessary. You have a lot of patience today.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

	4	3		8				
	1					8	6	2
	8				7			3
		1	6		2			
4			1	7	8			6
			3		5	4		
2			4				9	
9	6	4					8	
				6		3	2	

Difficulty Level ★

8/07

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

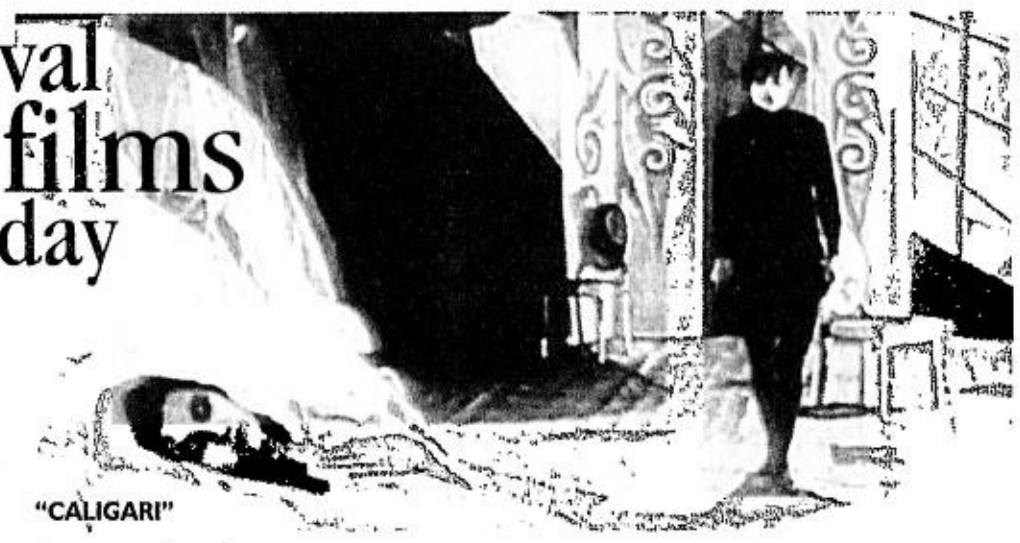
7	5	6	1	4	9	8	3	2
8	3	9	5	2	7	6	4	1
4	2	1	8	6	3	5	7	9
1	8	5	2	7	6	3	9	4
6	9	2	3	8	4	7	1	5
3	7	4	9	5	1	2	6	8
9	6	8	4	3	2	1	5	7
5	4	3	7	1	8	9	2	6
2	1	7	6	9	5	4	8	3

Difficulty Level ★★★★★

Unique festival of German films starts Thursday

By Constantino C. Tejero

LOCAL CINÉASTES, REJOICE! IT'S THAT TIME of year when the Goethe-Institut holds its unique film festival. No one who is into not only film evaluation but also film history should miss this third edition of the fest, particularly its first offering.



"CALIGARI"

Every Thursday of August at 8 p.m., a German silent film will be screened in SM Megamall Cinema with live-band accompaniment by some of the country's more progressive musicians. (Admission is free.)

These aren't just any wishy-washy Hollywood fare, either. These are certified masterpieces not just of the German film industry but of world cinema.

It is our strong opinion that if one should ever plunge into Parajanov or Tarkovsky, one must first mine these silent classics. Otherwise, one's film appreciation would be half-baked.

Exoticism

On Aug. 10, Robert Wiene's 1919 "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" will be shown, accompanied by Radioactive Sago Project.

This is the quintessential work of German Expressionism, that cinematic outgrowth of Van Gogh, Freud, Edvard Munch, Romanticism and Gothic.

It is the clearest example of that style of filmmaking, as the viewer can unmistakably observe in its set design which reflects the workings of the demented mind: shadows painted on walls and faces, exaggerated scale and distorted perspective, doors and windows askew, chimneys and rooftops about to topple, secret passageways, streets winding to nowhere.

This film has been faulted for stiffness in the acting, but we have to consider the period it was made. Also, stylized acting is just right for its theme of madness and murder, somnambulism, clairvoyance. In fact, the alienating gesticulations inadvertently contribute to the film's mystical quality.

One of the first Expressionist films to come out of Germany, "Dr. Caligari" is said to have helped lay the groundwork for such Expressionist classics as F.W. Murnau's "Nosferatu" and Fritz Lang's "Metropolis." We remember an updating of it in the 1960s, but that was no more than an enjoyable thriller, with none of the mystery and exoticism.

Sensuality

On Aug. 17, Paul Wegener and Carl Boese's 1920 "The Golem" will be shown with music by Drip.

Based on a Jewish folk tale about a Talmudic rabbi who created a gigantic warrior out of clay to protect the ghetto, the film is important not just as a cinematic gem but also for film historians. The legend is recognized as the source of the Frankenstein tale, only this film feels more barbaric, thus more authentic, than that never-ending "Frankenstein" series.

We saw this one in the Metropolitan Museum's audio-visual room in the early '80s and haven't seen it since, not even on bootleg DVD. For it to resurface to new audiences is an event by itself.

On Aug. 24, Murnau's 1931 "Tabu—A Story of the South Seas" will be screened with accompaniment by Bo Razon.

It was started as a collaboration with Robert Flaherty, but he quit in mid-production due to artistic differences with Murnau. So we presume those sensuous images of naked human bodies are Murnau left to his own devices.

Confirms one critic: "This is Murnau's purest and least inhibited celebration of physical sensuality and love. Fetishistic to a degree, with the flesh of its young hero as central image, the film is a rhapsody of textures and an exceptionally sensuous play of light, rhythm and composition. It is extremely beautiful."

Melodrama

"Tabu" is the exemplar of the ethnographic feature film, mixing tribal culture and melodrama in the high seas. The prewar Filipino movie "Zamboanga" must have been influenced by it, as they have similar themes, plot points and locales.

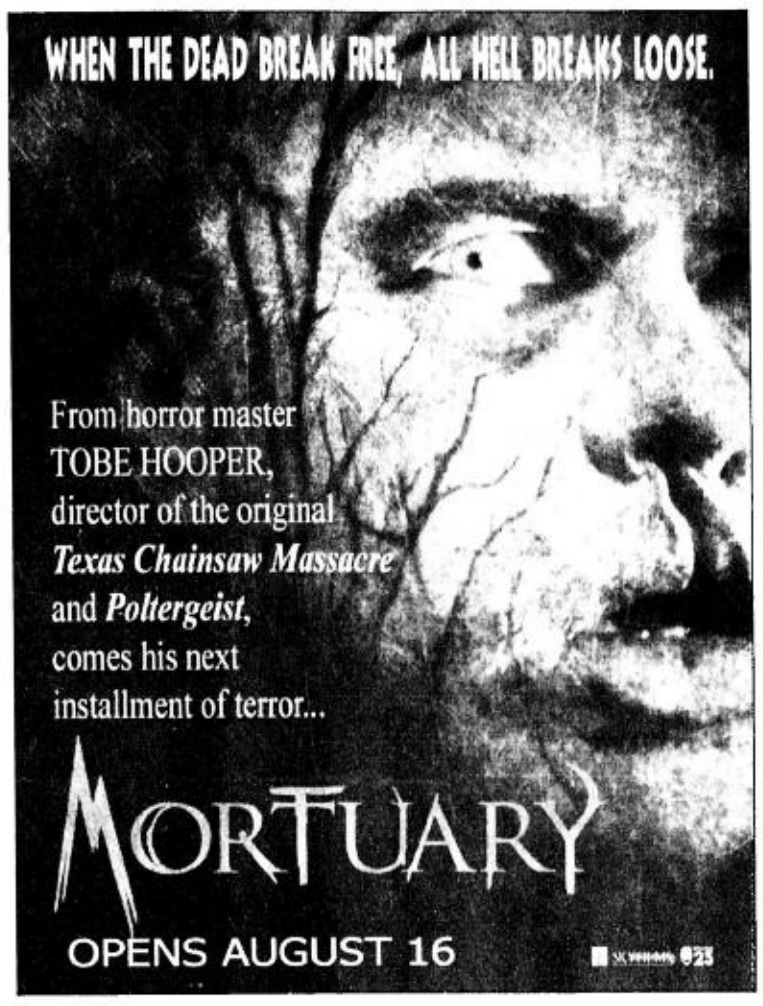
But for sheer exoticism and the near-worship of the human body, "Tabu" can hardly be topped. Its abundant chiaroscuro is lost on DVD, so one has to see it on the wide screen for full satisfaction.

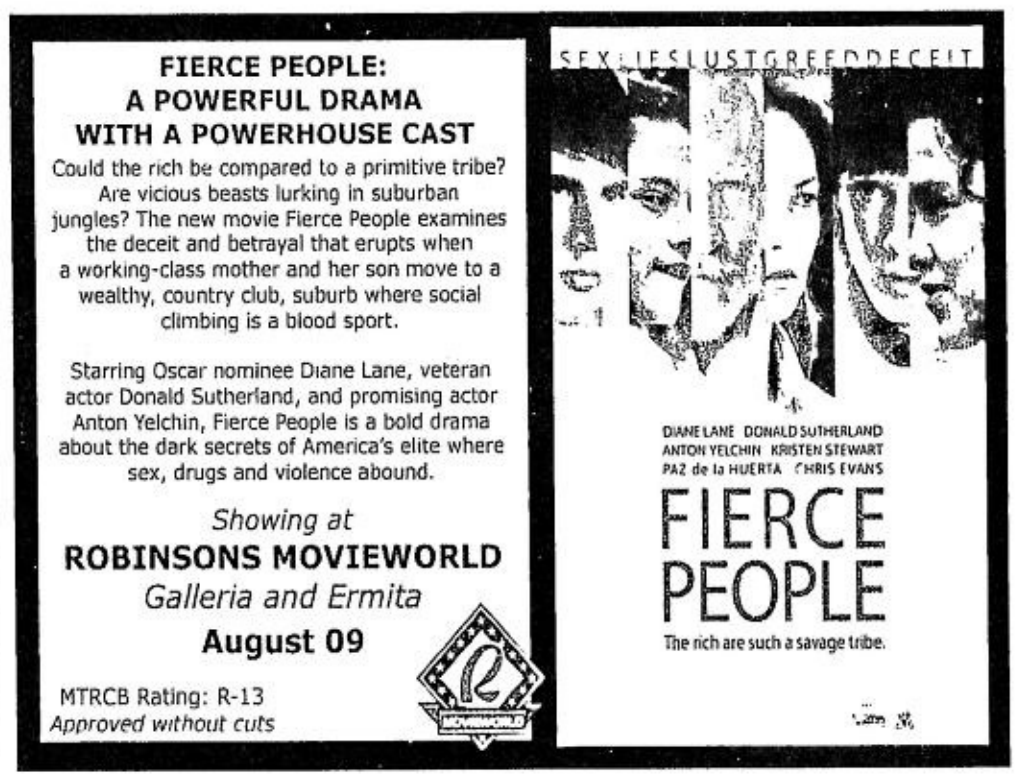
Raves another critic: "Its breathtaking beauty and artistry make it indispensable viewing, and the exquisite tragic ending—conceived musically and rhythmically as a gradually decelerating diminuendo—is one of the pinnacles of silent cinema."

Finally, on Aug. 31, Joe May's 1929 "Asphalt" will be screened, with music by Cynthia Alexander.

Billed as one of the last great German Expressionist films of the silent era, this one draws raves such as: "Starring the delectable Betty Amann in her most famous leading role, this is a luxuriously produced classic where tragic liaisons and fatal encounters are shaped alongside the constant roar of traffic."

How very modern! It is hype such as that, that makes everybody fall silent.





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MERYL in Donna Karan trench coat

KELLY green wool overcoat is by Lewin; black Mongolian lamb swing coat is by Gucci—both on Anne.

ANNE in cream felt Chanel overcoat

BLACK velvet strapless gown with beaded bow bolero jacket by Valentino; art deco jewelry by Leighton.

ON MERYL, charcoal grey jacket with light blue pin stripe by Bill Blass, right; beaded jacket also by Bill Blass, far right.

BLACK wool crepe Chanel jacket, Kristina Ti brown tweed mini-skirt, black leather thigh high boots

CENTER, Ann in a David Rodriguez top

ROUNDUP

Leno subs for Ebert

CHICAGO—Jay Leno's thumbs are about to get a workout.

"The Tonight Show" host is filling in as a guest critic on the movie review show "Ebert & Roeper" while regular co-host Roger Ebert recuperates from cancer surgery.

Leno will be the first of at least two guest hosts. Director Kevin Smith is slated to host in a show airing Aug. 12-13.

Ebert, 64, is at a Chicago hospital, where he is in good condition "and improving each day" from surgery last month to repair complications from a previous cancer surgery, the show said in a statement.

This week's episode of "Ebert & Roeper" was taped in Los Angeles to accommodate Leno's schedule. *AP*

Water crisis probe

REPORTER Ricky Carandang visits three households to test the tap water in the Aug. 9 episode of "Probe."

Cheche Lazaro investigates allegations against National Dairy Authority administration Salvacion Bulatao, who has been relieved because of alleged violations of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act.

Also featured is Sister Mary Placid, founder of an organization honing musical talents and giving opportunities to those willing to learn classical music.

100th 'CSI'

STUDIO 23 airs the 100th episode of "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" on Aug. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

The special episode, "Ch-Ch-Changes," brings together the Las Vegas crime lab's heroes for another twisted mystery written by series producer Jerry Stahl.

To the rescue are Gil Grissom (William Petersen), Catherine Willows (Marg Helgenberger), Warrick Brown (Gary Dourdan), Nick Stokes (George Eads), Greg Sanders (Eric Szmanda), Sara Sidle (Jorja Fox) and Capt. Jim Brass (Paul Guilfoyle) when the LVPD discovers a young showgirl named Wendy stabbed to death inside her car.

New 'CSI: Miami'

MIAMI CSIs continue their dedicated defense for crime victims in "CSI: Miami (Season 4)," which air Wednesdays, 10 p.m. on AXN.

The all-new episodes see the investigators in a daily quest to collect and analyze evidence which allows them to defend the memory of the latest victims—a half-dead man saved by maggots, bodies in the pool of a mansion, and more bodies dumped by pirates.

'Creepy Hideouts'

ON DISCOVERY Travel and Living, "Destination Week: Creepy Hideouts" takes viewers all over the globe, uncovering the scary details of haunted lodging and visiting some of most recognizable ancient burial sites on the planet, including Stonehenge and the Great Pyramid of Giza.

It also escorts viewers to the graves of some of the world's most well-known icons, including Michelangelo, Rudolph Valentino and Jim Morrison, then walks viewers through the hidden vaults and chambers that lie beneath some of the most famous cities in the world.

Beginning tomorrow, the series airs every night from 11 p.m. to 12 a.m. and encores the next day from 9 to 10 a.m.

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HOUSE

'House' premier

"HOUSE (Season 2)" premieres on Aug. 14 on AXN with mysterious maladies and patients with diseases threatening the doctors' lives.

An old patient returns to settle a score with House—fatally. Between the ethical questions that hit the House team and the no-holds-barred investigations that the medical team does themselves, it is hands-on instinct, medical reasoning and pure trial-and-error at its sharpest.

With House's unconventional tactics and emotional brutality, patients can never decide if he's the worst doctor or the best ever.

The series airs Mondays at 10 p.m.

MUSICAL Director Mel Villena to contestants: "Find your own voice."

ABC 5 exec confirms talent 'piracy'

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan

AN ABC 5 OFFICIAL HAS confirmed reports that one contestant in the talent search program "Philippine Idol" has dropped out of the competition to join a rival singing contest—after another TV network reportedly approached several contestants and convinced them to switch channels.

"We are sad because kids have to face decisions like these so soon," Perci Intalan, ABC 5 Creative and Entertainment Production head told INQUIRER Entertainment on Wednesday. "They are still new in the business. From our end, we are flattered. Instead of looking elsewhere, other networks decided to just get 'Philippine Idol' contestants, apparently because they see that the best have come here."

An ABC 5 insider said the one who left joined ABS-CBN's "Pinoy Dream Academy," which has the same format as "Idol." "Dream Academy" is a franchise from the same Dutch company behind the Kapamilya network's "Pinoy Big Brother."

> 'We're flattered that other networks are eyeing 'Idol' contestants'

The source said several Kapamilya employees had gone to see one of the "Idol" judges to convince the judge to "just let (some of) the contestants go."

Contract issue

"There is an issue there," Intalan said of the contestant's transfer. "The contract that applicants signed states that once they come on board, they must stay on board unless they decide to back out from the contest. But the reason should not be because they are moving to another competition."

Meanwhile, the contest's top 24 contenders were chosen on Thursday after the scheduled three-day theater auditions conducted by judges Pilita Corrales, Ryan Cayabyab and Francis Magalona at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in Pasay City. This signals the beginning of live performances and voting

ABC 5/ F2

NOT an entirely enviable job for judges (from left) Mr. C, Pilita Corrales and Francis M

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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				Dream Music Videos	V League				Sentro	How Clean Is Your House	ABC Action Movies				Big News	Toloo TV			
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Zenki	Yakitate! Japan	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning		Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	Oh Fine Oh Yes!	Mirada De Mujer
AXN							Boarding Pass (Season 4)					The Ultimate Fighter		Numbers (Season 2)		Lost (Season 1)		Lost (Season II)	
Cartoon Network	My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack/ Sayonara Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny/ Shaman King	The Simpsons/ Courage The Cowardly Dog	Teen Titans/ The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Justice League Unlimited/ The Simpsons	The Batman/ Aqua Teen Hunger Force/ Sealab 2021	X-Men Evolution/ Gundam Seed	Static Shock/ Shaman King
Cinema One		Asawa Ko Huwag Mong Agawin				Bata, Bata Paano Ka Ginawa				Uno				Antipolo Massacre				Dilryo	
Cinemax				Exorcist II The Heretic				Delusion (6:15PM)				Naked Gun 33 1/3 Final Insult			Beyond Betrayal (9:20 PM)			Friday The 13th Part III (10:50PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		What Should You Do?		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Masterminds	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Prison Break		Prison Break		Cold Case	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-lkable Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Black Hole High	Suite Life Of Zack And Cody	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN				Major League Baseball Friday						Atlantic Coast Conf. Basketball N. Carolina Vs Duke				Sportscenter Asia	LPGA Golf McDonald's LPGA C'ship				Sportscenter Asia
ETC	Friends 10	Beauty And The Geek 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Project Runaway		Queer Eye For The Straight Guy		America's Next Top Model 5		ET Weekend	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	The Biggest Loser 2		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Benediction And Devotion	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Bible Treasure Chest	Image Of God	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	G.K. Chesterton: The Apostle Of Common Sense II	Threshold Of Hope		Sunday Night With (Encore) Fr. Benedict Groeschel		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	Good Or Evil: Who Decides?	The Gospel Of John	Freedom & Authority	Catholic Compass	
Fox News		Beltway Boys	Fox News Watch	Bulls & Bears	Cavuto On Business	Forbes On Fox	Cashin' In	Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Lagot Ka Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
Hallmark Channel								McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine				Judging Amy					Judging Amy (11:45PM)
HBO				Amber Frey: Witness For The Prosecution			Betrayal				Uncle Buck (7:20 PM)			Curb Your Enthusiasm Pilot		HBO Sneak Peek: HBO First Look: Harry Potter And The Prisoner Of Azkaban	The Making Of Anchorman: The Legend Of Ron Burgundy	Entourage 03 Talk Show	Entourage 04 Date Night
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Gamburager	Gosaurer	Rajin-Oh	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E	Super Gals	Gosaurer
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Krusada Kontra Krimen		Japan Video Topics/ Ams		EBC Earth Files		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Ams	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		The Late Show David Letterman		Bottomline		Afterburn		X-Men Evolution	Beat The Geeks	Mad TV		That 70s Show	Family Guy	The Late Show David Letterman		Jack In The Box			
Lifestyle Network	Get Color	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	Embellish This	Barefoot Contessa	Everyday Italian	Food 911	E! Extra: 101 Most Awesome Moments In Entertainment		NY Fashion Week	Martha		Radical Sabbatical	Genuine Article	Good Finds	Style Star
MTV Philippines		Wildboyz	8th & Ocean		MTV Hits					Get Spotted		TRL		Wildboyz	8th & Ocean				
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXLOG	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mobile MYX Top Picks		Urban MYX	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXLOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	Nat'l Geographic Specials		Naked Science		The Living Edens						About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Naked Science Lightning Strike		The Living Edens: Arctic Oasis	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alas.			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Rey Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition		Dial M		Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Pagbubunyag		News Beat (Live)		Openline (Live)	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	DWTV Journal News	Quadriga
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Right On Top	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron/ My Life As A Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks/ All Grown Up		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO	Tatlong Anak, Isang Ama				Nagmula Sa Lupa				Hiram Na Mukha				Basta Ikaw Nanginginig Pa				To Love Her More		
Qtv	Goodluck	Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Damo	Project 11	H2O Hahaha...Over!		News On Q	Sapulso		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Scare Tactics	Movie Monday					Newswatch Now	Go Negosyo		Cops For Truth
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports		2006 Jones Cup				WTA Tokyo: Finals		Beach Volleyball: FIVB Men's - Portugal		World Pool 2006 Masters		USAB World Tour: USA vs CHINA				Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	Indonesia Open: MXD Finals	
Sports Plus				Golf Today	Nopi Tunervision	Ultimate Fighting Championship Japan				Party Poker.com World Open 2005				World Game		Buick Open Final Round			
Star Movies				Operation Delta Force (3:55 PM)			The Assassination Of Richard Nixon			Flight Of The Phoenix (7:05 PM)				Hidalgo				The Immortals (11:15PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Desperate Housewives		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	My Wife And Kids	Still Standing	Yes Dear	Becker	Dance Fever			My Wife And Kids
Studio 23	Bewitched	YuGi-Oh 3 & 4				Batman Beyond	Dragon Booster	6Teen	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	High School Reunion 2		Lost (8:20 PM)	Alias (9:10 PM)		News Central	America's Next Top Model		Travel Time

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GALLERIA 632-9116

1 LADY IN THE WATER • THX
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:40

6 TAMARA
12:30 2:40 4:50

2 MIAMI VICE
1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50

7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

3 JUST MY LUCK
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

8 THE BREAK-UP
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

4 THE ANT BULLY
1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50

9 WOLF CREEK
1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00

5 SUKOB
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

10 SUPERMAN RETURNS
12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 SUKOB 10:10 12:30. 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

2 WOLF CREEK
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00

5 MIAMI VICE
10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50

3 THE ANT BULLY
10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00

6 JUST MY LUCK 12:30 2:50
THE BREAK-UP 5:10 7:30 9:50

4 TAMARA
12:20 2:20 4 20 6:20 8:25 10:05

7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:30 3 35 6:40 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193 - 682-8199

1 LADY IN THE WATER
12:20 2.30 4 40 6:50 9:00

5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
12:00 3:00 6.00 9.00

2 SUKOB
11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00

6 THE BREAK-UP
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

3 THE ANT BULLY
12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10

7 MIAMI VICE
12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00

4 JUST MY LUCK
1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00

8 WOLF CREEK
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

NOVALICHES 936-3231 / 935-3229-30

1 MIAMI VICE
2 THE ANT BULLY
3 WOLF CREEK
4 SUKOB

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 THE FAST AND THE FURIOUS 3
2 SUKOB
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 THE ANT BULLY
2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 WOLF CREEK

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Kindly answer all questions completely.
Fill in the missing letters to complete the right answer

1. The creator of the Miami Vice TV Series
M _ CH _ EL M _ NN
2. Plays the role of Sonny Crockett in the Miami Vice movie.
_ OL _ N FA _ R _ LL
3. Jamie Foxx plays this character in the movie.
R _ CA _ D _ T _ BS
4. In the TV Series, who played the part of Caitlin, the woman Sonny Crockett marries?
SH _ EN _ E _ STO _
5. Miami is in what US State?
FL _ R _ DA

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2 LOVEWRECKED
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4 ANT BULLY

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3 UNITED 93
4 LADY IN THE WATER
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SUPERMAN RETURNS
9:00PM
PREMIERE CINEMA
SUKOB
DIRECTOR'S CLUB
MIAMI VICE
CENTERSTAGE
RESERVED
1 MIAMI VICE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 ANT BULLY
4 TAMARA
5 SUKOB
6 JUST MY LUCK
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
MIAMI VICE
CINEMA 2
ANT BULLY
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SM CITY SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 MIAMI VICE
2 SUKOB
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY
5 THE BREAK-UP
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 TAMARA
9 CAVITE

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 MIAMI VICE
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 MIAMI VICE
7 ANT BULLY
8 CAVITE
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 SUKOB
11 THE BREAK-UP
12 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SUKOB
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 THE BREAK-UP
6 SUKOB
7 MIAMI VICE
8 ANT BULLY
9 WHITE LADY
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 MIAMI VICE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 SUKOB
6 TAMARA
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 WHITE LADY
9 ANT BULLY
10 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 MIAMI VICE
2 ANT BULLY
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 SUKOB
5 SUKOB
6 JUST MY LUCK

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
THE BLOCK
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 SUKOB
6 ANT BULLY
7 MIAMI VICE
8 TAMARA
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 JUST MY LUCK
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
12 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 SUKOB
2 ANT BULLY
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 MIAMI VICE
7 SUKOB
8 WHITE LADY
9 TAMARA
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

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2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY

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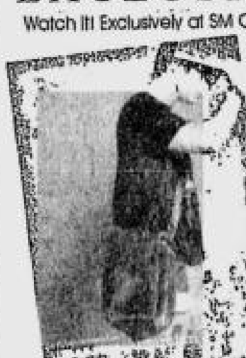

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2 CHAOS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUKOB

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 MIAMI VICE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 ANT BULL
6 SUKOB
7 WHITE LADY
8 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 CHAOS
2 SUKOB
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 THE NUN

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUKOB
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 RV
4 LADY IN THE WATER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUKOB

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SUKOB
2 SUKOB
3 ANT BULLY
4 WHITE LADY
5 CAVITE
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

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1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 JUST MY LUCK

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Gifted r

WHEN WE HELPED CONCEPTUA ize the Cinemalaya Independe Film Festival, one of our princip motivations was to provide a show case for new movie directors share their talent with the viewi public.

New filmmakers do get break from the mainstream movie indu try, but most of them have be forced to make sleazy sex flicks.

We think this is demeaning, a potentially corrosive, so we pre the Cinemalaya way, which giv new filmmakers the freedom choose their entries' topics. a themes, and focus on doing t very best they can to fully viv them.

This is important to us, becau we believe that many Filipino t ents (not just in the field of fil are nipped in the bud due to poor inconsiderate handling.

In this country, talents general aren't discovered and nurture they are forced to "survive" und inhospitable and discouraging c cumstances, and only a few har souls make it.

Unfortunately, some of these su vivors aren't really talented, ju gutsy or thick-skinned.

And many of the real talents st trying to make it through the d couraging mess, so they don't sha what they have to offer with vie ers.

So, we need grant-based comp titions like Cinemalaya, becau they enable new filmmakers show what they can do without sa rificing their principles, or havi to suck up to manipulative pow brokers.

Focus and freedom are key b cause they enable filmmakers concentrate on sharing their vi of life with others. Thus, direct are able to develop their unique sion, so they don't end up as clon of this or that famous filmmak (remember "the new **Lino Brock** etc.?)

In this regard, we made it a poi to view all eight of the 2006 Cin

ABC 5 exe

From page F1

through SMS.

In an interview, Francis said he had picked his "24 favorites" on the very first day of the screening.

Master composer Cayabyab didn't have fun. "I got headaches," he said. "*Ang daming magaling na kailangang matanggal.*"

The 166 contestants were whittled down to 84 on the first day. On the second day, the remaining contenders were made to choose from three songs personally picked by "Idol" musical director Mel Villena. They were then assigned to a group with three members.

Contract

The male contestants were asked to chose from hits songs "Shout For Joy," "Part-time Lover" and "Trapped In A Stairway." Female contestants picked from "Mambobola," "I'm So Excited" and "Ain't Nothing Gonna Keep Me From You." Only 40 were asked to stay on for the third day.

"Work is more enjoyable now," said Francis. "When I picked my top 24, I asked myself these questions: Will I want my photo to be taken with these contestants? Will I line up to ask for their autograph?"

The first Philippine Idol will sign a recording contract with Sony BMG Records.

Star material

"There are very good ones, but I'm not sure if their albums will sell," said Francis. "We're looking for a good singer who's also star material. The champion doesn't necessarily sell the most CDs. Sometimes, the runner-up outsells the champ. ["American Idol 2's"] Clay Aiken outsold Ruben Studdard."

Villena gave these tips to the hopefuls: "Practice. Find ways to develop your talent. And, most important, you shouldn't sound like anyone else. I encourage you to do your own interpretation of every song."

The musical director said he was amazed at the amount of talent at the theater auditions and attributed it to the popularity of the "Idol" show. "I'm glad I'm not a judge," he said. "I can just imagine how stressed Ryan, Francis and Pilita are."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

...ew directors make their mark

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

...malaya full-length features, primarily because we wanted to see how this year's new directors did.

We were gratified to conclude that most of them did well, and we hoped that mainstream producers agreed enough to tap them to meg follow-up features in the months to time.

In our considered view, the best direction was turned in by **Ron Bryant** in "Rotonda," because he kept a firm hand on the complex tale and its many interweaving situations and characters.

That definitely isn't easy, so Bryant should be credited for his work in "Rotonda," which is much more focused than his rendering of "Baryoke" in last year's Cinemalaya film fest.

So, when Bryant did win the 2006 competition's nod as Best Director, we felt vindicated in our choice.

What about the other new *direks*? The second best director, in our opinion, was **Adolf Alix Jr.** ("Donsol"), because his staging and use of camera were fluid and logical.

His integration of underwater shots into his film was also done in natural manner, and he elicited fine performances from **Sid Lucero** and festival Best Actress winner **Angel Aquino** (although we thought that "Mudraks" **Rio Locsin** did superior work).

Third best new director in our view was **Mike Sandejas**, who megged the ambitious and complex "Tulad ng Dati." We admired his daring, and he did pull off most of the movie's scenes.

But he did go overboard at times, especially during the film's final fourth section, which was a welter of musical numbers and turgid acting.

Be that as it may, Sandejas' directorial work was impressive and should be cited as one of the festival's best ("Tulad ng Dati," in fact, won the top Best Picture plum).

Finally, we want to cite **Benji Garcia** for his handling of "Batad, Sa Paang Palay." Although his film was visually limited (too many small scenes, not enough visual splendor), Garcia's sensitivity and deep appreciation of ethnic tradition ennobled his production, and made it a specially significant viewing experience, especially for rootless urbanites who have lost their essential sense of self.

We trust that this year's batch of new Cinemalaya directors will continue to fulfill their potential, and make more feature films that will dramatize and vivify the heart and soul of the Filipino experience.

• • •

DID YOU KNOW...

WASHINGTON—MACAULAY CULKIN, BEST REMEMBERED FOR HIS antics in "Home Alone," will star in a dark comedy about a couple facing sex problems, the industry newspaper Variety has reported. Miles Brandman's movie, "Sex and Breakfast," has the couple following the advice of a therapist who espouses group sex as a cure-all.

"I love this script," Culkin, 26, told Variety. He hasn't starred in a movie since 2004, when he was nabbed for possession of marijuana. He did a few teen movies between 1990 and 1994, for $8M each. *AFP*

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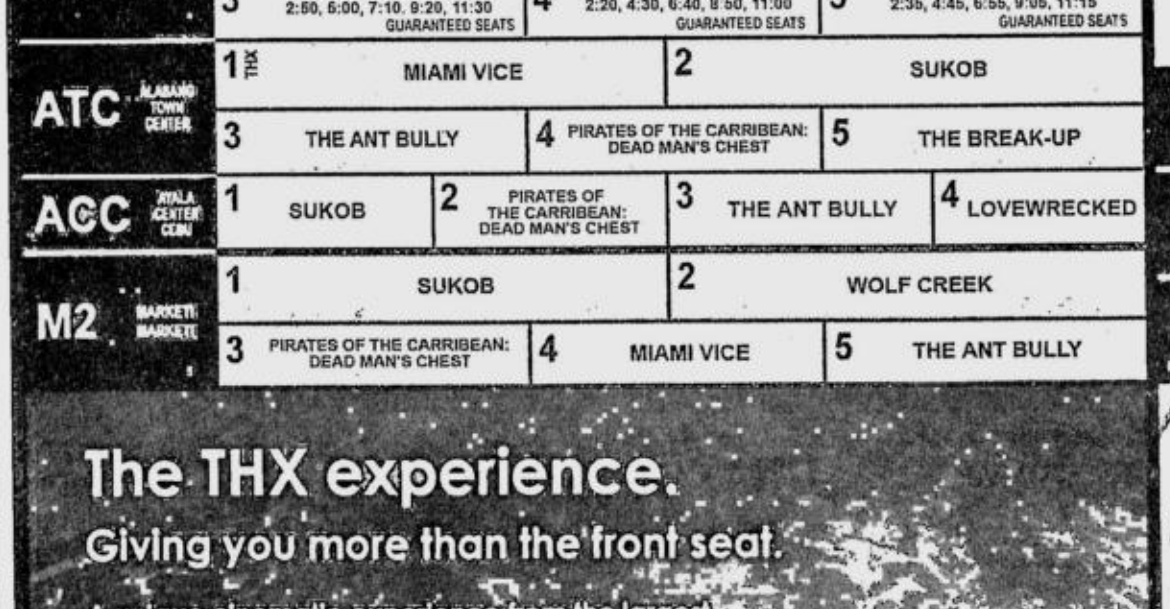

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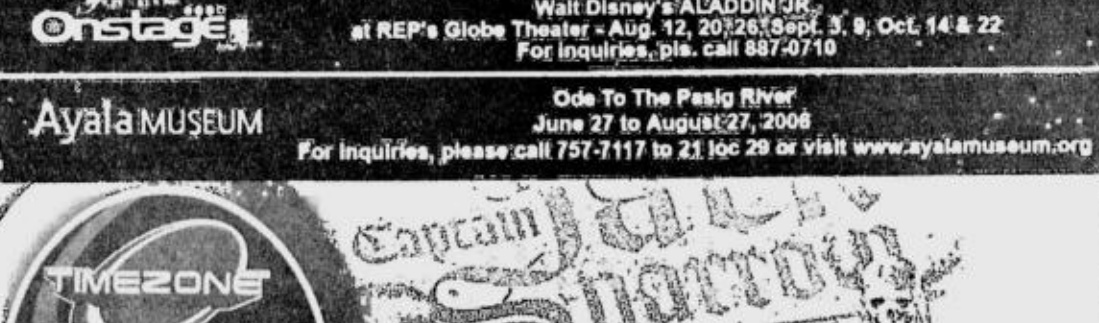

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ENTERTAINMENT

CHRISTOPHER Walken, left, plays an enigmatic salesman to Adam's everyman.

Humor malfunctions in Sandler's latest film

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

AS AN ADAM SANDLER COMEDY, "CLICK" can be categorized alongside the more inane ones in his filmography, like "Happy Gilmore" and "Anger Management." The laughs are random in "Click," too, which centers on workaholic architect Michael Newman (Sandler), who uses a super remote control to make his harried life easier. But it's a one-joke movie that's stretched far beyond its limits. The lowbrow humor doesn't always get its desired reaction as Sandler's dumber films might guarantee. But the romantic angle and the film's bigger family drama aspect simply don't, well, click.

However, it brings together actors that one wouldn't normally see together in a movie with Sandler. It's quite amusing to see Christopher Walken as the enigmatic inventor Morty, the guy who gives Michael the universal remote. There's lovely Kate Beckinsale, who temporarily ditches her recognizable rough-housing heroine role to play a housewife and mother of two. And while it's not exactly surprising to see David Hasselhoff here, his goofiness as Michael's infuriating playboy boss is much appreciated.

The story, while unnecessarily prolonged in certain parts, also possesses some charm. Once Michael discovers the unusual perks that his powerful gadget allows, he becomes a radically changed man, conveniently fast-forwarding himself through tedious but meaningful moments of his life with his family. But when the story becomes redundantly sentimental and serious, the message becomes muddled, and feels misplaced in the whole deal.

Typical structure

It tries to tug at heartstrings when the gizmo reveals tragedies in Michael's future, so whatever feel-good expectations one might have during the movie's first half get dampened. It also becomes incredibly dubious, if it weren't already, when Morty's identity is explained later. But when the story becomes hopelessly hokey and messy, it cleans itself up, and not in any way that you'd expect. While some will feel cheated that the script pulled such a stunt near the end, it all boils down to the realization that it still is just another inconsequential, family-aimed flick that preaches to the choir.

Sandler familiarly contorts his face and yells when he's acting crazy, and is infectiously hyper, as usual. That's pretty much what you get here: just throw in some horny dogs, some married-guy green humor, and Sean Astin in a speedo, for good measure. Well, it certainly isn't the clever and sweet "50 First Dates," or the nostalgic guilty pleasure "Wedding Singer," but "Click" still follows the typical Sandler-starrer structure, in that he's the would-be loser who gets rewarded in the end.

If only we had a super-remote control to get to the few, funny parts.

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By Anselmo Roque
PDI Central Luzon Desk

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Tuesday, August 8, 2006 ★★ 4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 241 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Palace backs bid to use vote-counting machines

MALACAÑANG IS SUPPORTING THE MOVE BY President Macapagal-Arroyo's election lawyer to petition the Supreme Court to allow the government to use the automated counting machines bought from the Mega Pacific consortium in the 2007 elections.

Lawyer Romulo Macalintal has said he was filing the petition this week as a taxpayer and not as Ms

PALACE/ A6

Mayon's big blast looms

Plans up to move OFWs out by sea

By Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS to evacuate Filipino workers from Lebanon by sea either through Syria or Cyprus beginning this week, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. announced.

Conejos said the decision to take the sea route was firmed up after President Macapagal-Arroyo met with Task Force Lebanon members led by Vice President Noli de Castro yesterday.

"The President wanted to know when (the crisis team) could evacuate using the sea routes and we told her this may happen anytime this week," Conejos told reporters at a Palace briefing.

He said Ms Arroyo wanted a "constant" movement of OFWs out of Lebanon.

De Castro, presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers, said the President had accepted the offer of Greek shipping tycoon Antoniou Antonious to help

PLANS/ A6

Gov't starts evacuation of 50,000 villagers

By Ephraim Aguilar and Gil Francis Arevalo
Inquirer Southern Luzon Bureau
and Dona Pazzibugan
in Manila

LEGAZPI CITY—BUNDLED in Army trucks, jeepneys and private cars and hugging their dearest possessions, thousands of villagers fled their homes yesterday after one of the Philippines' deadliest volcanoes blasted out clouds of ash, indicating a major eruption was imminent.

The government ordered the forced evacuation of anywhere from 35,000 to 50,000 villagers after declaring an 8-km zone on the southeast sector of Mt. Mayon a "no man's land."

Waiting for a truck on a roadside in Barangay Mabinit, one of the most threatened villages, an elderly woman nervously clutched her

MAYON'S/ A5

Malacañang execs snub probe anew

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and TJ Burgonio

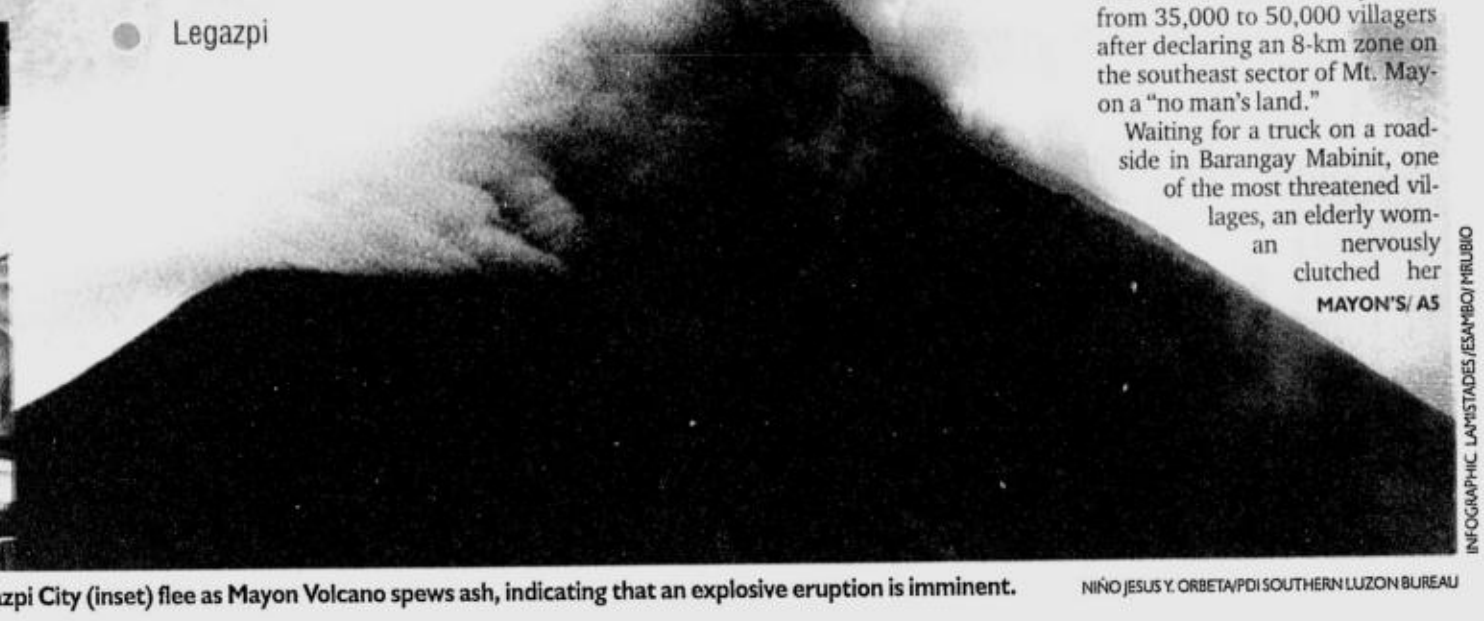
BRING IT ON!

For the third time since the Supreme Court struck down President Macapagal-Arroyo's gag order, Malacañang yesterday snubbed a congressional inquiry and challenged senators to question its boycott before the high tribunal.

None of the seven officials summoned to the Senate committee on labor hearing on alleged malversation of funds amassed from the $25 collected from each departing overseas Filipino worker showed up yesterday despite the threat of being cited in contempt after they boycotted one hearing scheduled on July 31.

"If they think they want to

MALACAÑANG/ A6



RESIDENTS of Barangay Mabinit in Legazpi City (inset) flee as Mayon Volcano spews ash, indicating that an explosive eruption is imminent. NIÑO JESUS Y. ORBETA/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

INFOGRAPHIC: LAPISTADES/ESAMBO/ MIRUBIO

No signs of letup in Israel-Hezbollah fighting

BEIRUT, LEBANON—AS INTERnational efforts to broker a ceasefire faltered, Israel and Hezbollah showed no signs of a letup in nearly four weeks of bitter fighting that has already killed at least 1,100 people, wounded thousands more and drove nearly a million others from their homes.

Israel warplanes launched a new wave of bombing raids on Lebanon on Monday, killing 14 civilians and turning homes to rubble, after the Jewish state suffered its deadliest day since the conflict began four weeks ago.

At least one Israeli soldier was killed in fierce battles with Hezbollah guerrillas around a border town.

Even as air strikes and ground battles intensified, Israeli officials warned they would continue the offensive to cripple the fundamentalist Shiite Muslim Hezbollah movement regardless of any truce.

At the New York headquarters of the United Nations where the Security Council was expected to adopt a ceasefire resolution by Tuesday, diplomats said they could no longer say when a vote would take place after Lebanon objected to the text.

Arab foreign ministers were scheduled to meet in Beirut on Monday to discuss an alternative seven-point plan proposed by Lebanon's Prime Minister Fuad Siniora to bring a halt to 27 days of warfare.

As day broke over Beirut, Israeli fighter-bombers pounded Hezbollah's stronghold in the southern suburbs with bombs and air-to-ground missiles, sending huge clouds of black smoke into the air over districts that had already been largely reduced to rubble.

Israeli warplanes also struck houses in villages around the port of Sidon, the main city in the south and carried out a dozen raids on roads linking the region with Syria, including the highway leading to the main border crossing.

At least 14 civilians were killed in the air strikes. In one village, television pictures showed workers hacking with axes through the rubble and twisted metal beams of a house in a bid to find survivors or recover corpses.

The road to Syria, one of the major routes out of Lebanon for people trying to flee the conflict, has been knocked out repeatedly as Israel keeps up its blockade that has left the country almost completely cut off from the outside world.

NO SIGNS/ A4

BOLANTE'S house in the posh and tightly guarded Ayala-Alabang Village in Muntinlupa City. EDWIN BACASMAS

U.S. ASYLUM REQUEST

Mansion photos to be used vs Bolante

By Philip C. Tubeza

IS THE POSH AYALA-ALABANG VILLAGE in Muntinlupa City a "New People's Army-infested area?"

Pictures of the mansion of former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Jocjoc" Bolante in the tightly guarded community of the rich and famous will be submitted to the Chicago immigration court to convince it to dismiss his asylum request in the United States, lawyer Harry Roque said yesterday.

Roque, one of the opposition lawyers who prepared the impeachment complaint against President Macapagal-Arroyo, said pictures of Bolante's home on Ma. Cristina Street would show that his claim that he was in danger of persecution from the NPA was baseless.

Bolante is believed to have engineered the distribution to administration allies of P728 million in fertilizer funds, purportedly to ensure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in the 2004 presidential election.

He was arrested at the Los Angeles International Airport on July 7 for supposedly carrying a canceled B1/B2 visa. The reason for the visa cancellation remains a mystery.

Bolante was subsequently detained at the San Pedro Detention Center on Terminal Island, 48 km from Los Angeles.

He is believed to have requested political asylum, supposedly because the NPA, the armed wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines, was targeting him for his involvement in the fund scam that hurt the farmers.

But CPP spokesperson Gregorio Rosal said Bolante's claim of being on the NPA hit list was a ploy to boost his eligibility for asylum.

Roque said he had found at least three case precedents in American jurispru-

MANSION/ A15

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Central and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains over the western sections of Southern Luzon and Visayas. The rest of Luzon will have cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/07/06 SOURCE: PAGASA

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2006

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Jusmag generals give up, move out

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

ARMY SOLDIERS WERE READY TO BODILY move out ex-Armed Forces chief of staff Gen. Benjamin Defensor yesterday had he continued to resist eviction from the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (Jusmag) military quarters in Fort Bonifacio.

Luckily for Defensor, the embarrassing situation did not come to pass. The retired army general reluctantly turned over the keys to his quarters, leaving most of his furniture behind.

Defensor, along with retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Melchor Rosales and retired Army Brig. Gen. Raymundo Jarque, were the last among former ranking military and police officials who held out at the disputed housing area.

Defensor, who had the briefest stint as AFP chief of staff—two months—among President Macapagal-Arroyo's appointees, reportedly heaped abuse on officers and soldiers sent to carry out the eviction.

"He was moving heaven and earth to get an extension. He's been calling up people," said one officer who joined the eviction team.

"He was really foul-mouthed. All the bad words that can be used, he threw at our soldiers," added the officer.

Defensor, the second Air Force chief to become AFP chief of staff and brother of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, was named ambassador-at-large for counterterrorism after he retired in November 2002.

Rosales reportedly insisted on staying until he was reimbursed for repairs he made after his Army quarters were razed in a fire.

Officials, who have no recollection of such a fire, were still checking records as of press time.

Rosales, who retired in 2001, is now an interior undersecretary.

Jarque, who defected to the New People's Army in 1995, reportedly asked for more time until his bedridden wife could be well enough to be transported.

Jarque, for a time, served as spokesperson for the communist National Democratic Front. In 2001, he became a consultant of the state-run Philippine National Oil Company.

His quarters were under the name of his son, the late Capt. Rene Jarque, who resigned from the military service in 2000.

The Army started the forcible eviction last Friday after a 20-day temporary restraining order by a Pasig City court had lapsed.

By Saturday, the families of 78 former military and police officials who continued to occupy the Jusmag quarters after they had retired, resigned or died, were evicted.

Only Defensor, Rosales and Jarque continued to hold out.

Under military regulations, military personnel are required to vacate their quarters within 60 days after retirement.

But in 1991, officers living in Jusmag had their wives organize a group called Southside Homeowners Association Inc. (SHAI) which claimed it had bought the property for P11.9 million.

The government, through the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA), however, said the property, now valued at P12 billion, was never declared for sale and claimed SHAI's deed of sale and land title were forgeries.

SHAI's claim was upheld by a Pasig City court and by the Court of Appeals, but it had been challenged before the Supreme Court.

Without waiting for the high court's decision, the Army eviction team moved in last July 14 but was eventually stopped by a TRO.

Defensor had reportedly harassed soldiers and officials, including Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino.

"He claimed he had a right to the land. Then he reasoned it was difficult to pack his belongings. Then he said the house where he will move into was too small," said an officer.

Having had just about enough, an Army eviction braced itself to bodily carry Defensor out of the house. "We expected a physical confrontation. We were prepared for any eventuality," the officer said.

But before noon yesterday, Defensor called the eviction team commander and turned over the keys.

He did not say when he would take all his belongings out.

Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres Jr. said it was up to "higher headquarters" to say when the three officials could remain in their quarters.

"They have signified their intention to leave," Torres said.

MEMBERS of the eviction team guard the house of former Armed Forces chief Benjamin Defensor at the Jusmag compound in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City. REM ZAMORA

Boncodin back in GMA fold, appointed Petron director

By Christine O. Avendaño

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS yesterday appeared clueless as to how former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin was able to get a board seat in Petron Corp., which is 40 percent owned by the government.

All Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye and Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor could say was how happy they were that Boncodin—one of the former members of the Cabinet of President Macapagal-Arroyo who formed the Hyatt 10 and called on her to resign last year—was back on the "team" again.

"We're just happy that Boncodin somehow found her way to the board of Petron, but as to the background I have no personal knowledge," Ermita told reporters at a new government media forum at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City where he, Bunye and Defensor were guest speakers.

"All I know is she's already there," Ermita said.

Ermita pointed to Defensor but the latter said he also did not know how Boncodin got the position.

Even though Boncodin was part of the Hyatt 10, Defensor said she never made any strong statements against the President even as she sought her resignation.

He said Boncodin and the President still talked to each other.

Defensor also took a swipe at the Hyatt 10, saying there were only five left in the group after the other members went on "hiatus."

For his part, Bunye expressed elation that Boncodin had qualified for the board seat.

In a statement, he urged those so inclined not to sow intrigues on Boncodin's return to the government.

"This administration welcomes experience and talent where these are needed," the presidential spokesperson said.

"We welcome Ms Boncodin back to the team and will be happy to work with her again," Bunye said.

Customs probers clear Tohs of smuggling charges

By Leila B. Salaverria

AFTER A SEVEN-MONTH INVESTIGATION, the Bureau of Customs has cleared two siblings with close ties to First Gentleman Mike Arroyo of involvement in smuggling activities, saying it did not find any evidence to implicate them.

Vicky and Tomas Toh were among several persons the Senate in January had ordered the bureau to investigate for smuggling.

Vicky Toh used to work in the office of the First Gentleman who, in turn, used to lawyer for the Toh family in their hardware business.

Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales said in a statement that based on the bureau's investigation, there was "no record or evidence of any transactions by the Tohs, including those made by Linen and Bath Co. Inc. which lists the Tohs as incorporators."

Later, in a phone interview, Morales said the investigation of the Toh siblings stemmed the INQUIRER columns of Mon Tulfo, which were picked up by the Senate.

On Jan. 14, 2006, Tulfo had written that the Tohs were protecting a smuggler by interceding for him with former Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina. As a result, he said, the smuggler's shipments were allowed to leave the customs warehouses without inspection.

Morales said the bureau checked if the Tohs were accredited to withdraw shipments from the bureau's warehouses. He said they were not and there were no records of any such transactions, which would have been reflected in the bureau's computerized records.

He said the BOC also checked if the Tohs were incorporators of any of the companies transacting business with the bureau. It also coordinated with the police and the National Bureau of Investigation.

He said the bureau found one company that listed the Tohs as incorporators—Linen and Bath Co.—but it had not imported anything in the last three years.

"I cannot therefore charge the Tohs with smuggling because we have no evidence against them. I can't bring them to court on hearsay. If I do that, there will be a backlash on me and the case would just be dismissed," Morales said.

Finance dep't files graft charges vs retired BIR official

By Norman Bordadora

THE DEPARTMENT OF FINANCE'S REVENUE Integrity Protection Service yesterday filed a graft complaint against a retired officer of the Bureau of Internal Revenue for allegedly accumulating wealth not commensurate to her income as a public servant.

The DOF-RIPS yesterday charged retired chief revenue officer Rosalie Sarthou with violating the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees and the Revised Penal Code.

"[We] discovered that during the period of respondent Sarthou's service with the government, she acquired and registered in her name and of other persons, properties that she failed to declare in any of the statement of assets, liabilities and net worth submitted by her during her incumbency," the complaint said.

The complaint was filed by DOF-RIPS investigators Romualdo Dolores, Joel Apolonio and Temes Vargas.

According to the investigators, Sarthou allegedly acquired "numerous prime properties" in Laguna, Taguig and Parañaque despite her annual salary of just over P200,000 and her husband's declared annual salary of just over P150,000.

"The most prominent [of the properties] is a P4-million property in Parañaque under the names of her daughters," the investigators said in their complaint.

"A financial analysis of respondent Sarthou's SALN's revealed that she accumulated wealth grossly disproportionate to her income as a government employee," they added.

At one time in 1992, the investigators said Sarthou registered an almost P2.6 million increase in net worth despite her relatively small annual salary.

If she is found guilty, Sarthou's pieces of property will be forfeited in favor of the government. She will also have to return her gratuity pay and her retirement benefits.

No boxing in schools, says DepEd

By Alcuin Papa

BOXING CLASS IS OUT.

A top official of the Department of Education (DepEd) has counted out the inclusion of boxing in Physical Education (PE) classes for elementary and public high schools around the country.

Fe Hidalgo, DepEd undersecretary for plans and programs, said yesterday that the department does not have the resources, technical expertise and qualified instructors to teach boxing as a PE subject.

"The DepEd doesn't have the proper resources to teach the sport to students. We prefer to teach the basic skills such as English, math and science," Hidalgo said.

Manny Lopez of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines (Abap) had said his group is willing to share its expertise in teaching students.

Hidalgo, who was acting education secretary for almost one year, said she would prefer that students interested in boxing would enroll in private boxing gyms and clubs.

"Considering boxing's popularity in the country has accrued, I don't think if our office (Department of Education) will let it be part of the curriculum in schools. They (technical committee) are only discussing the possibility, but I don't know if it will happen," Hidalgo said.

Earlier, it was reported that the education department was mulling over the inclusion of boxing in PE because of the success of Filipino boxing icon Manny Pacquiao and to scout for future boxing stars.

The topic was taken up in a recent DepEd Technical Committee meeting but has yet to be discussed by all ranking DepEd officials.

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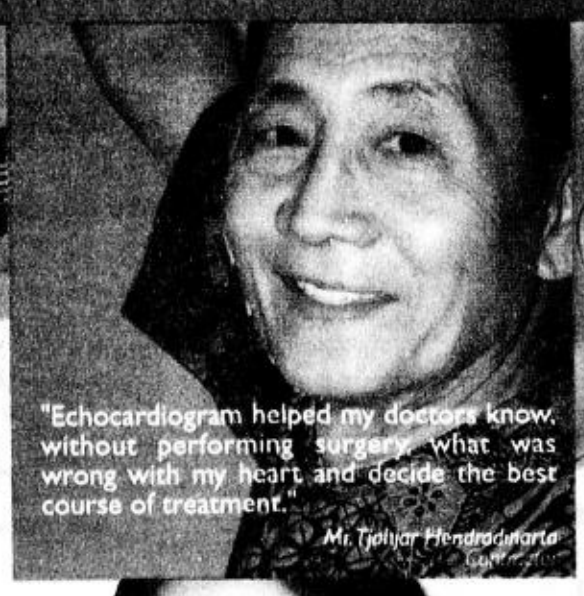
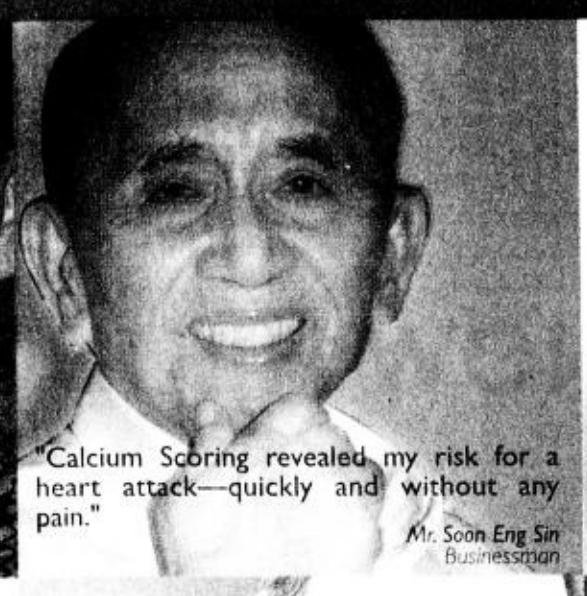


"Echocardiogram helped my doctors know, without performing surgery, what was wrong with my heart and decide the best course of treatment."
Mr. Tjoljar Hendradjarta
Businessman



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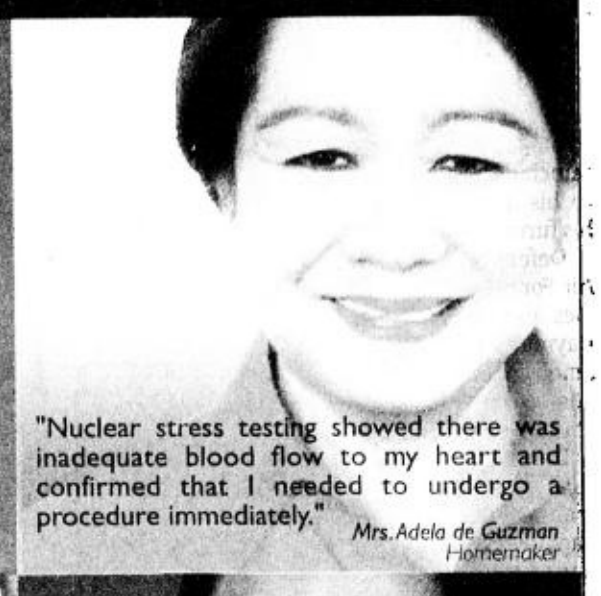

"Nuclear stress testing showed there was inadequate blood flow to my heart and confirmed that I needed to undergo a procedure immediately."
Mrs. Adela de Guzman
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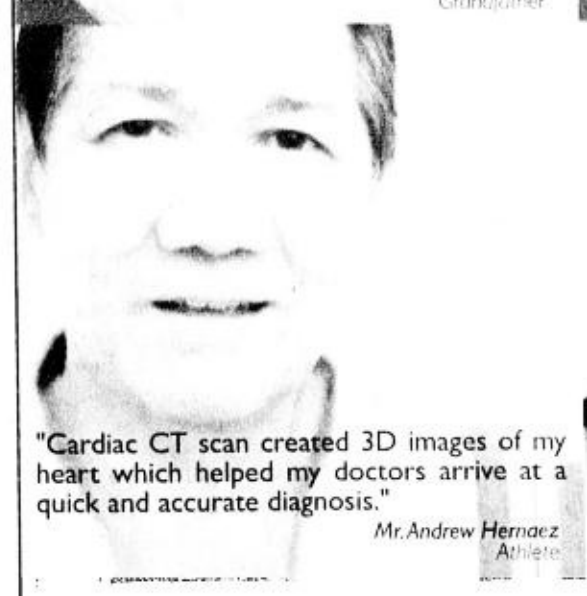

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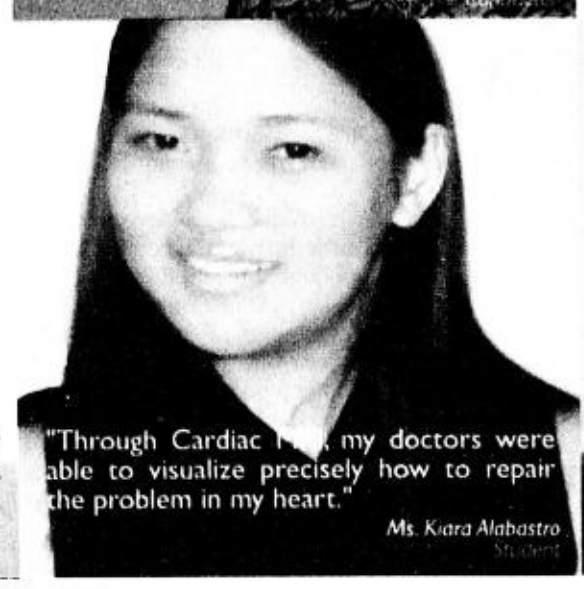
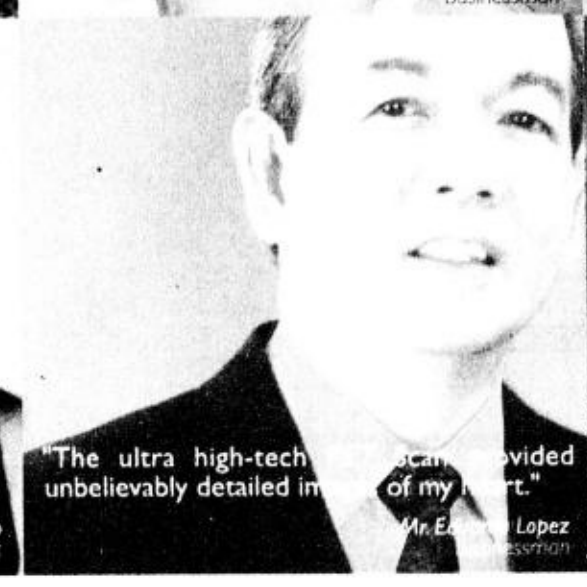
Mr. Andrew Hernaez
Athlete



"Through Cardiac [illegible] my doctors were able to visualize precisely how to repair the problem in my heart."
Ms. Kiara Alabastro
Student



"The ultra high-tech [illegible] unbelievably detailed im[illegible] of my [illegible]rt."
Mr. E[illegible] Lopez
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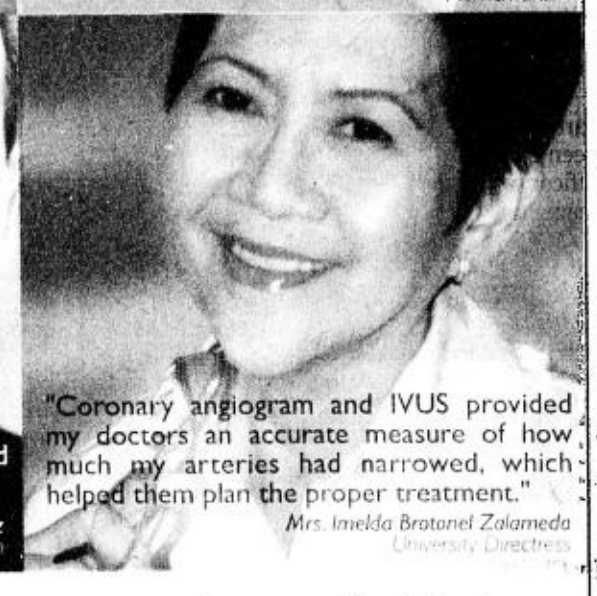

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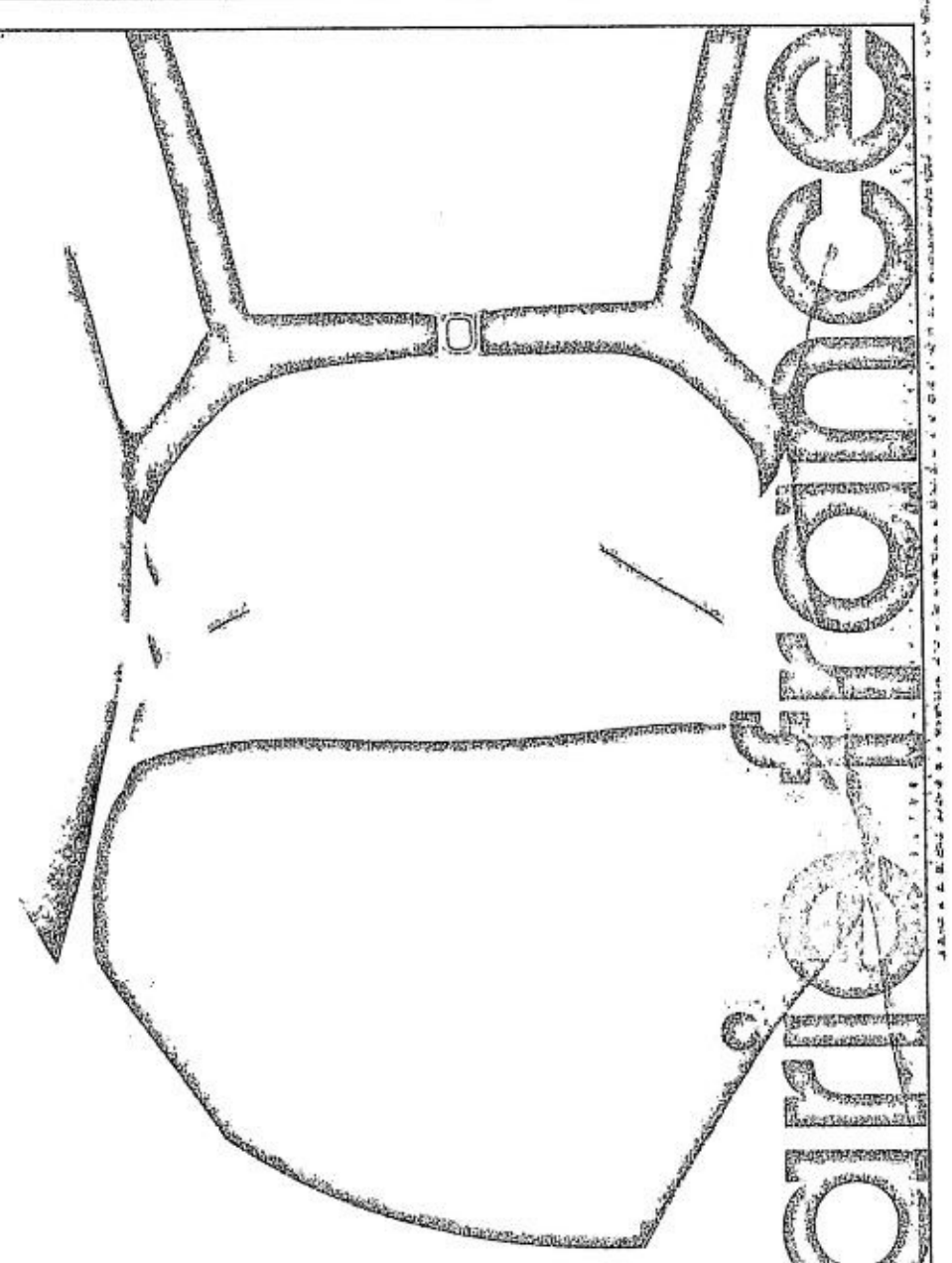

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OFWs who fled Lebanon undergo debriefing

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONE OF THEM LOOKED HAGgard, her entire body trembling. Another one was sweating profusely but didn't want to talk.

A third thought that she was about to die—a fear that turned into anxiety days after she had left the fighting in Lebanon. "Will I still get my job back?" she repeatedly asked.

The behavior of these Filipinos evacuated from Lebanon was usually exhibited in debriefings at the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration office in Pasay City by psychiatrists and psychologists.

The National Center for Mental Health interviewed 106 workers in separate sessions on July 27, Aug. 2 and 3, according to Health Undersecretary Margarita Galon.

Of the number, six were recommended for admission to the center because their "behavior needed further evaluation," Galon told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Only three were actually confined, with the rest preferring to be treated as out-patients, she said.

Post-traumatic stress

"The reactions to stress were expressed in the physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioral aspects," Galon said.

Health experts were apparently on the lookout for indications of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), a condition common among people who had gone through war or a natural disaster.

Not all of the 106 workers debriefed at the Owwa office had a close encounter with the raging Israel-Hezbollah conflict, according to Galon.

Many of them were reeling from anxiety not uncommon among, say, workers abused by their employers, she said.

"Some of them were hardly fed by their employees, others received very little salary despite heavy work," Galon said. "Others experienced being detained by their abusive employers."

Dr. Isabel Melgar, a psychology expert from the Ateneo, earlier explained that Filipinos working abroad were naturally placed in a "position of weakness."

"If you're not the boss, you're more vulnerable to stress," Melgar said. "By being helpers, they could be learning to be helpless. Their workplace is a perfect breeding ground for stress disorder."

The possibilities for stress should encourage family and friends to be more sensitive to the behavior these people so they could immediately be brought in for treatment, she said.

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Hezbollah surprises Israel with its training, tactics, arms

JERUSALEM—ON DEC. 26, 2003, A MASsive earthquake leveled most of Bam in southeastern Iran, killing 35,000 people. Transport planes carrying aid poured in from everywhere, including Syria.

According to Israeli military intelligence, the planes returned from Iran to Syria carrying sophisticated weapons, including long-range Zelzal missiles, which the Syrians passed on to Hezbollah, the Shiite militia group in southern Lebanon that Iran created and sponsors.

The shipments are just one indication of how—with the help of Iran and Syria, the main sponsors of Hezbollah—the militia has sharply improved its arsenal and strategies in the six years since Israel abruptly ended its occupation of southern Lebanon.

The militia's astonishing stockpile of Syrian- and Iranian-made missiles, some 3,000 of which have already fallen on Israel, has been the focus of much attention as the Israeli Army struggles for a fourth week to defeat Hezbollah before a ceasefire.

But Iran and Syria also used those six years after the Israeli occupation to provide satellite communications and some of the world's best infantry weapons, including modern, Russian-made antitank weapons and Semtex plastic explosives, as well as the training required to use them effectively against Israeli armor.

It is Hezbollah's skillful use of these weapons—in particular, wire-guided and laser-guided antitank missiles, with double, phased explosive warheads and a range of about 3 km—that has caused most of the casualties to Israeli forces.

Hezbollah fighters use tunnels to quickly emerge out of the ground, fire a shoulder-held antitank missile, and then disappear again, much the way Chechen rebels used the sewer system of Grozny to attack Russian armored columns.

With modern communications and a network of tunnels, storage rooms, barracks, and booby traps laid under the hilly landscape, Hezbollah's training, tactics and modern weaponry explain why the Israelis are moving with caution.

The Israelis say Hezbollah's fighters number between 2,000 and 4,000, a small army that is aided by a larger circle of part-timers who provide logistics and storage of weapons in houses and civilian buildings.

Hezbollah guerrillas operate much like a revolutionary force within a civilian sea, making it hard to fight them without occupying or bombing civilian areas.

The former Syrian president, Hafez Assad, was careful to restrict supplies to Hezbollah. But his son, Bashar, who took over in 2000—the year Israel pulled out of Lebanon—has opened Syria's warehouses.

Syria has given Hezbollah its most sophisticated antitank weapons, which was sold to the Syrian Army by Russia.

Despite Israeli complaints to Moscow, "Russia just decided to close its eyes," a senior Israeli official said. *New York Times News Service*

No signs of letup in Israel-Hezbollah fighting

From page A1

Along the border, Israeli troops also engaged Hezbollah guerrillas in clashes in a bid to eradicate the Shiite fighters from the area and halt rocket attacks that killed 12 Israeli soldiers and three civilians on Sunday alone, the deadliest single day for Israel.

The Israeli Army said one soldier was killed around the border town of Bint Jbeil—the scene of the fiercest ground combat of the conflict, bringing to 59 the number of military personnel killed. Another 36 Israeli civilians have been killed in a barrage of Hezbollah rocket fire from across the border.

Israel's offensive launched on July 12 has killed more than 1,000 people in Lebanon, wounded more than 3,300 and driven more than 915,000—close to a quarter of the population—from their homes, according to official tolls.

But with world powers unable to agree on a resolution to end the bloodiest cross-border fighting in a quarter century, Israel vowed it would plow on until it crushed Hezbollah.

"We are continuing operations to clean up southern Lebanon and to meet the goals we have set ourselves, regardless of any possible ceasefire," said Gen. Alon Friedman, the commander of Israel's northern military region.

Alon's comments were echoed by Public Security Minister Avi Dichter, who said the "No. 1 objective is to stop the rocket fire."

"(The Army) has not been given any time limit to achieve this goal," Dichter said, warning that operations will continue "with no regard to a ceasefire as long as the objective is not achieved."

Arab meeting

In war-ravaged Beirut, Arab foreign ministers were to meet at talks to be chaired by Arab League Secretary General Amr Mussa who has criticized the UN efforts and said "some great powers were obstructing the ceasefire."

The ministers are due to discuss holding a summit of Arab leaders to help put an end to the fighting in Lebanon, Mussa said.

The UN Security Council is debating a ceasefire resolution drafted by France and the United States which calls for a "full cessation of hostilities" and the deployment of an international force in a buffer zone in south Lebanon.

Siniora has asked for major changes to the draft, saying it fails to insist on an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon, which had pulled out of the country in 2000 after a bloody 22-year occupation.

Israel unleashed its military might against Lebanon after Hezbollah guerrillas snatched two soldiers in a deadly cross-border raid on July 12. A few weeks earlier, Israel launched a similar offensive against the Gaza Strip to retrieve another serviceman captured by Palestinian guerrillas.

The Israeli military on Sunday said it had captured a Hezbollah militant suspected of involvement in the July raid but there was no word on the fate of the soldiers whom Hezbollah insists must be exchanged for Arab prisoners in Israeli jails.

Ceasefire debate

The tit-for-tat attacks continued after the UN Security Council began debating a French-US draft resolution which contains plans for an international force to police a buffer zone in southern Lebanon once agreement on a long term political settlement is reached.

Lebanon complained that the draft did not call for an immediate withdrawal of Israeli forces, something which Israel says is possible only when a 15,000-strong international force is deployed to disarm Hezbollah.

Siniora's plan calls for an Israeli withdrawal, the expansion of the UN peacekeeping force sent to the area after a previous invasion in 1978, the deployment of the Lebanese Army to the border and the disarming of Hezbollah guerrillas.

The UN Security Council was to hold new consultations on its draft resolution on Monday. France had earlier said it expected the 15-member council to vote on the text on Monday or Tuesday.

But in light of the Lebanese objections, diplomats said it was no longer certain when a vote would take place.

As for Hezbollah, one of its two ministers in the Lebanese government, Mohammed Fneish, said: "When the Israeli aggression ceases, very simply, we will stop (fighting) on condition that no Israeli soldier remains inside Lebanese land."

Both Iran and Syria, which support the Shiite Muslim guerrillas, have similarly rejected the French-US ceasefire proposal.

Syrian Foreign Minister Walid Muallem warned of regional war if Damascus came under attack.

First step

But US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice appealed for swift passage of the resolution by the Security Council's 15 members, saying it was just a "first step" to lasting peace.

Rice sought to ease Lebanese concerns about the lack of any reference to the need for an Israeli pullout.

"No one wants to see Israel permanently in Lebanon," she told reporters after talks Sunday at President George W. Bush's ranch in Crawford, Texas.

"Nobody wants to do that," Rice said. "The Israelis don't want it, the Lebanese don't want it, so I think there is a basis here for moving forward." *Reports from AFP, AP and Reuters*

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Mayon's big blast looms

From page A1

rosary beads and made the sign of the cross.

Nearby, a half-naked man carried bundles of newly cut firewood on his shoulder. Other men had toddlers in their arms.

"It could just be hours or a matter of two days before a major eruption will occur," resident volcanologist Eduardo Laguerta told an emergency meeting of the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

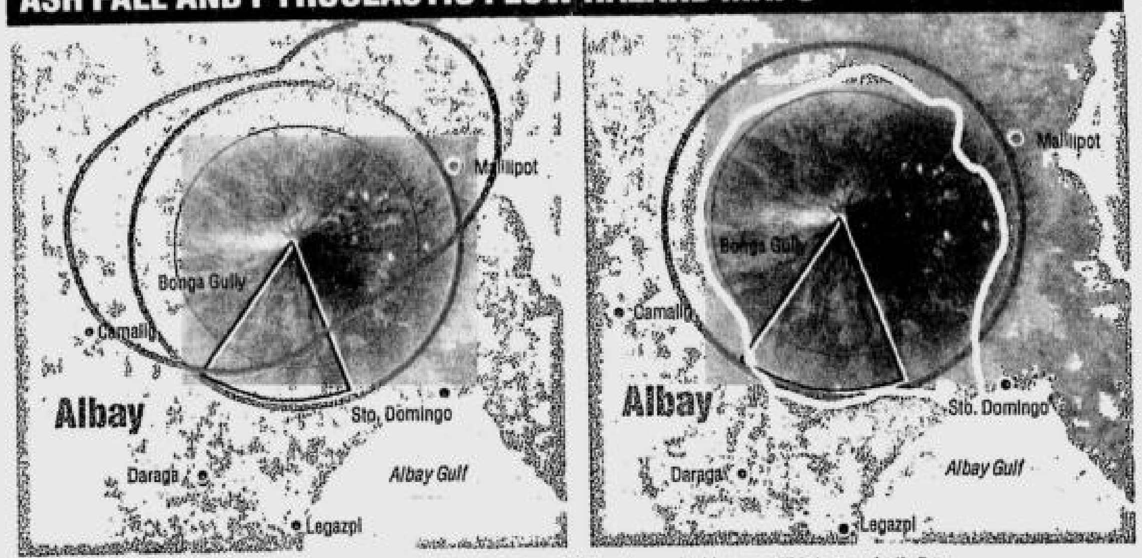
Whole families clutching sleeping mats, pillows, frying pans, radios, plastic food and water containers and sackfuls of clothes joined the massive flight.

Behind them, mushroom- shaped ash clouds towered overhead.

Megaphone in hand, Mayor Noel Rosal roamed Mabinit, appealing to residents to leave.

One of the country's 22 active volcanoes, Mayon has had a violent history of 47 eruptions since 1616. Its worst eruption buried Cagsawa town and killed 1,200 people in 1814. A 1993 eruption killed 77 farmers.

ASH FALL AND PYROCLASTIC FLOW HAZARD MAPS



Legend: 8-km-radius Permanent Danger Zone — Additional areas highly susceptible to pyroclastic flow — 6-km-radius PDZ — Areas prone to heavy ash fallout — Areas prone to pyroclastic flow

'Hazardous and explosive'

Laguerta gave the grim forecast after Mayon belched ash columns towering from 300 to 800 meters on the 23rd day of its restiveness. More ash ejections were expected during the day.

This prompted the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs) to raise the alert one notch higher to level 4, which meant that a "hazardous, explosive eruption" was imminent.

By noon yesterday, authorities expected some 35,000 people, or 6,995 families, to have been taken to 31 evacuation centers.

"I just talked to Governor (Fernando) Gonzales and he said the evacuation is going on smoothly," Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz Jr., who chairs the National Disaster Coordinating Council (NDCC), said in a news briefing in Manila.

Airports normal

Disaster teams have deployed 80 trucks aside from those provided by the military, the police and private groups.

Contingency plans adopted by the government included being prepared for bad weather, which could change the direction of the lava flow, said Cedric Daep, head of the Albay Public Safety and Emergency Management Office (Apsemo).

Daep said that in case of a major eruption, passage through major roads would not be prohibited unless there was a mudflow.

Even airports will have normal operations unless affected by ashfalls or declared otherwise by the Air Transportation Office, he said.

Some refused to leave

Other officials gave a higher estimate of the number of people that would need to be forced out of their villages.

"More than 50,000 people will be expected to be evacuated," The Associated Press quoted provincial disaster officer Jukes Nunez as saying. These included people who had ventured back into the danger zone to tend to their crops in the fertile volcanic soil.

Gerry Losentales, an 87-year-old farmer, had refused to leave his hut near his small vegetable farm even after the land was partly seared by lava flows a few days ago. He was among dozens of residents ordered to evacuate the village of Mabinit below the crater.

"I survive by tending that farm and I have lived here all my life," a teary-eyed Losentales said as soldiers helped him get on an Army truck loaded with villagers to be brought to a temporary school shelter. "I hope the government can help me now."

Off-limits to sightseers

Lava began flowing July 14 and has been slowly creeping down Mayon's slopes.

Volcanologist July Sabit said the alert level was raised after six explosions were monitored starting at 7:08 a.m.

The military has deployed troops to keep sightseers away from the edge of the advancing lava.

No ashfalls rained on nearby villages as the ash explosions rose only 800 meters and ash fell only on the upper slopes of the volcano, Phivolcs said.

But the main lava trail in the southeast section could advance by more than 100 meters downslope within the day, it said.

Forced mass evacuation started in villages in Legazpi about one hour after Phivolcs raised the alert status.

The four affected villages—Mabinit, Bonga, Buyuan and Matanag—have 10,500 residents. As of 5 p.m. yesterday, their evacuation was almost complete, said Brig. Gen. Arsenio Arugay, commander of Task Force Mayon.

The evacuation was orderly, except for some resistance from a few hardheaded villagers.

Soldiers with backpacks assisted men, women, the elderly and the children in the evacuation.

Areas in danger

Disaster teams used village chapels and barangay halls as pickup points for evacuees.

Authorities listed the following areas as included in the 8-km extended danger zone:

- Barangays Anoling, Tinubuhan, Sua, Upper Quirangay, Salugan and Upper Cabangan in Camalig town.
- Barangays Miisi, Budiao, Matnog and Banadero in Daraga town; Mabinit, Bonga, Matanag and Buyuan in Legazpi.
- Barangay Baligang in Ligao City.
- Barangays Bonot, Magapo, Oson, part of Buhian and Comon in Tabaco City.
- Barangays Canaway, Calbayog and part of San Roque in Malilipot town.
- Barangays Lidong, Fidel Surtida, San Isidro, Sta. Misericordia and San Antonio in Sto. Domingo town.

P250 million

If the volcanic activity takes a turn for the worse, Phivolcs Chair Renato Solidum said the agency could further extend the danger zone to 10 km and recommend the evacuation of an additional 39,791 people, or 6,875 families.

Disaster teams in Albay have prepared food, water and medical supplies for seven to 10 days.

President Macapagal-Arroyo has set aside P250 million in standby funds for the relief effort if the evacuation continues beyond that period, Secretary Cruz said.

Officials estimated the daily cost of providing for the basic food needs of 7,000 families at P1.4 million, or P200 per family a day. This covers rice, sardines and noodles.

Worst-case scenario

Classes were suspended in the designated evacuation centers, such as the Albay Central, San Roque, Gogon and Bagumbayan elementary schools.

Gov. Fernando Gonzales said residents of affected areas in Malilipot, Sto. Domingo, Tabaco, Legazpi, Daraga, Camalig, Ligao and Guinobatan might be asked to prepare to evacuate, too.

In a worst-case scenario, the Apsemo has said that the minimum number of villagers to be evacuated would be 74,069 people, or 13,870 families, from 40 villages in three cities and five municipalities.

The 2,460-meter Mayon is renowned for its perfect cone shape. The Philippines is in the Pacific "Ring of Fire," where volcanic activity and earthquakes are common.

The 1991 eruption of Mt. Pinatubo is considered one of the biggest of the century. Pinatubo hurled nearly 20 million tons of sulfur dioxide into the air, causing global temperatures to drop temporarily by about half a degree Celsius. The eruption killed at least 300 people, displaced 1.3 million residents, buried 98,600 hectares of farms, and damaged P4 billion worth of infrastructure. *With reports from Niño Jesus Y. Orbeta and Job B. Belen, Inquirer Southern Luzon Bureau, and Kate Pedroso, PDI Research*

Villagers leave with heavy hearts

LEGAZPI CITY—HOUSEwife Rosby Nuñez, 26, isn't the type to take things for granted.

When the military yesterday ordered a full evacuation after Mayon Volcano showed it was about to blow its top, there was no need for Nuñez to pack.

She had packed a week ago, just in case.

If evacuating was easy for her, it wasn't quite so for Elsa Pajalla, 41, a mother of eight.

"I had to bring bags of clothes for all of them. My husband also had to go back several times to our village just to gather firewood that we could use while here (in the evacuation center)," Pajalla said.

Pajalla also worried about her family's crops at the foot of the volcano.

"Our only source of income is farming. Now that our crops have been destroyed by the eruption, we don't know where to get the money to spend for my children's needs," she said while preparing a simple dinner of taro and rice for her children.

"That's why we are asking for financial help or temporary livelihood from the government." *Ephraim Aguilar, Inquirer Southern Luzon Bureau*

Malacañang execs snub Senate probe a third time

From page A1

bring us to court again, we are prepared for them," said Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

Sen. Jinggoy Estrada, the committee chair, said a caucus later Monday was to decide whether to cite in contempt the no-shows at yesterday's hearing.

The hearing was prompted by complaints by Philippine Ambassador to Lebanon Al Francis Bichara that he had not received a single centavo from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration despite its earlier pronouncements that it had sent $4 million for the evacuation of Filipinos from war-battered Lebanon.

The Owwa finally announced it had transmitted $150,000 four days after Bichara's complaint received widespread publicity in Manila, triggering the Senate decision to call the inquiry.

In a landmark ruling in April, the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional Executive Order No. 464 which required administration officials to seek authorization from Ms Arroyo before appearing in congressional inquiries.

The court ruled that congressional hearings in aid of legislation were part of the principle of check and balance enshrined in the Constitution. It upheld the right of Congress to seek information and hold accountable the executive branch for its actions.

On two occasions in May—before the court threw out a petition for reconsideration by Malacañang of the April 20 ruling—administration and military officials ignored summonses to appear at congressional hearings.

Info on questions needed

In boycotting the first scheduled hearing on July 31, Ermita asked the committee to specify the legislation proposed to be enacted from the hearing and the questions to be asked in advance. Estrada subsequently enumerated the laws to be enacted.

But Ermita said in an Aug. 7 letter to Estrada that "in the absence of information on the questions which the invited officials are expected to answer, the officials will be unable to attend the hearing today."

He took exception to Estrada's assertion that Congress was not required to provide advance questions, citing the Supreme Court's ruling on EO 464.

Ermita expressed confidence that Malacañang would win the next round before the Supreme Court if a case were brought against it as a result of the snub. "Definitely, because we are only invoking the Supreme Court decision," he said.

Aside from Ermita, the officials invited were Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, Owwa Administrator Marianito Roque, Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr., Administrator Rosalinda Baldoz of the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and Palace Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor.

Ermita said he had asked that any probe be deferred until the evacuation of the 30,000 Filipinos in Lebanon had been completed because most of the officials the Senate wanted to question were busy with the ongoing relief effort.

The executive secretary said he was "happy to hear" that Estrada was willing to give in to the government's request for a deferment should the government formalize its request in a letter.

Auditor reveals funds

While the government executives refused to go to Congress, Ermita said he had ordered the Owwa and Department of Labor and Employment to come up with the bank certificates showing the status of the Owwa funds.

Although its administrator did not show up yesterday, Owwa resident auditor Gemiliano Maloles testified during the hearing that Owwa had P7.1 billion in several banks, putting to rest reports the agency had run short of funds for the Lebanon evacuation.

Maloles disclosed that the Owwa had a deposit of P3.2 billion in the Land Bank of the Philippines and another P3.2 billion in the Development Bank of the Philippines as of June 30, 2006.

On top of this, the agency has another P703 million deposited in "various bank accounts," he said. In sum, the fund would amount to P7.1 billion.

"Yes, your honor," Maloles said when asked by Sen. Joker Arroyo if the funds were intact and were "readily available," corroborating a statement made by Roque last week in Malacañang that Owwa's P7.6 billion was intact.

Connie Regalado of Migrante International provided the most revealing testimony.

She said that on top of the alleged transfer of P530 million from the Owwa Medicare fund to the Philippine Health Insurance Corp. in March 2005, Owwa also invested P459.46 million in the Smokey Mountain Development and Reclamation project in 1995.

The project, which entailed developing the former garbage dump into a commercial area during the term of President Fidel Ramos, was a joint venture of the National Housing Authority (as the landowner) and R-II Builders Inc. owned by Reghis Romero II (as project manager and developer).

To finance the project, funds were raised through the issuance of assets participation certificates (APCs), considered government securities which were insured and guaranteed by the Home Guaranty Corp. Together with other government agencies, Owwa invested P459.46 million in the project. Its certificates had a face value of P500 million.

"But based on the COA report of December 2005, Owwa's investment ... was made in violation of a DOF circular when not redeemed at maturity date," Regalado said.

Upon maturity, the principal and interest were rolled over from the period of Oct. 24, 1996 to Oct. 12, 1999. As of Oct. 12, 2000, the maturity value of the initial investment of P459.46 million had reached P905.97 million, for an increase of 97.2 percent in five years, Owwa said on its website.

Director Roland Rey of the COA-Owwa said he would furnish the committee a copy of its report on the Owwa's investment in the project, adding: "I don't remember whether it was illegal."

P500-M disbursement

Maloles confirmed that the Owwa disbursed P500 million for the project, but said the Home Guaranty Corp. had paid the entire amount back to Owwa.

He also said there was no "express prohibition in the law" that the Owwa funds could not be invested in a project like Smokey Mountain.

Soriano, who also appeared at the hearing, said Owwa found it "financially sound" to continue investing in the project after 1997.

In a statement, R-II Builders said it was "unfortunate" the company was put in bad light.

"There is no scam," it said. "The bonds were issued by trustee banks like the Philippine National Bank."

Palace backs bid to use vote-counting machines

From page A1

Arroyo's election lawyer.

"The automation of the elections is one of the 10-point agenda of the government and this petition will help us move closer to achieving that goal," Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said yesterday at a government-sponsored breakfast forum.

Ermita noted that the Department of Science and Technology "has already certified the computers as fully accurate and we have long been pushing to use them for practical purposes."

Ermita and Macalintal may have conveniently forgotten the stand of the Supreme Court on the counting machines.

Vulnerable to fraud

In its ruling scrapping the controversial P1.3-billion contract between the Commission on Elections and Mega Pacific eSolutions in January 2004, the Supreme Court said the counting machines were vulnerable "to election fraud on a massive scale by means of just a few key strokes"

The court voided the Comelec's contract with Mega Pacific after it found that the poll body violated the law and its own bidding rules when it awarded the contract.

Macalintal told the INQUIRER that the Supreme Court decision "did not say we cannot use the computers. It is only saying there is an anomaly in the transaction which has made the deal null and void."

"The Supreme Court wants (the Ombudsman) to run after the public or private persons responsible for the anomalous transaction but it is not saying (the computers) are prone to cheating," said Macalintal, who also cited a study by the DOST which certified the accuracy and reliability of Mega Pacific's automated counting machines (ACMs) in various working conditions.

3 deficiencies

Macalintal may also have forgotten the three glaring deficiencies of the counting machines that the Supreme Court had cited:

- Failure to achieve "the accuracy rating criteria of 99.9995 percent" set by the Comelec itself.
- Failure to detect "previously downloaded results" at various canvassing or consolidation levels and to prevent these from being inputted again.
- Failure to print the "statutorily required audit trails of the count and canvass at different levels without any loss of data."

The high court said the Comelec's own bids and awards committee had noted that Mega Pacific's ACMs were not able to detect previously downloaded precinct results.

"(The) Comelec chose to ignore this crucial deficiency, which should have been a cause for the gravest concern. Come May 2004, unscrupulous persons may take advantage of and exploit such deficiency by repeatedly downloading and feeding into the computers results favorable to a particular candidate or candidates," the court said.

"We are thus confronted with the grim prospect of election fraud on a massive scale by means of just a few strokes. The marvels and woes of the electronic age!" it added.

The Supreme Court said Mega Pacific's counting machines were unable to print the audit trail, which is needed to "enable the Comelec to trace and verify the identities of the ACM operators responsible for data entry and downloading, as well as the times when the various data were downloaded into the canvassing system, in order to forestall fraud and to identify the perpetrators."

"This particular deficiency is significant, not only to this bidding but to the cause of free and credible elections," the court said, adding that audit trails are specifically required by Republic Act No. 8436, the law on automated elections.

"And yet, the commission simply disregarded this shortcoming and awarded the contract to private respondent, thereby violating the very law it was supposed to implement," the tribunal said.

The court rejected the respondents' claim that these deficiencies were "mere shortcomings or minor deficiencies in software or programming, which can be rectified."

Recover payments

Besides ordering the Office of the Ombudsman to investigate the criminal liability of those involved in the deal, the high court directed the solicitor general to recover the P849,167,697.41 that had already been spent for the project.

Macalintal said the government need not negotiate with Mega Pacific for the use of the ACMs because "these are already the property of the government after having fully paid for (most of the purchase price)."

He said the government had already forwarded a little over a billion of the P1.25-billion purchase price to Mega Pacific and that it would be "useless to get back these funds when the government could use these computers now while waiting for the court's final verdict."

He said the government would lose both ways if the government did not win in its action to recover the money while letting the ACMs deteriorate.

The unused machines are gathering dust in a four-story warehouse in Manila. They were supposed to be used in the 2004 national elections.

Macalintal likened the situation to the mothballed Bataan Nuclear Power Plant. The government has spent billions of dollars for the plant without ever putting it into use. The power plant sits on an earthquake fault.

Macalintal said he would call for a public demonstration of the ACMs to show whether these could be used in time for the 2007 polls.

Like Ermita, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos has insisted that the machines had passed the tests conducted by the DOST.

"Science Secretary Estrella Alabastro herself said she was willing to stake her position to back the certification issued by the DOST for the machines," Abalos said.

He said the Supreme Court based it adverse assessment of the counting machines "on the allegations by the petitioners."

With a report from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

Plans up to move OFWs out by sea

From page A1

in the sea evacuation.

De Castro was to meet with the owner of the Dubai-based Olympic Gulf Tankers Co. later yesterday to firm up the offer.

"The President was happy about the offer, that a foreign national is willing to help the Filipino evacuees. Our officials in Greece and Bahrain are now negotiating the connecting flights to Manila," De Castro told the INQUIRER after the task force meeting.

De Castro said the government was now asking the government of Bahrain, which offered a Gulf Air plane to ferry 1,000 OFWs from Damascus to Bahrain, if it could use the aircraft to pick up OFWs from Cyprus to Bahrain and on to Manila.

Philippine Ambassador to Greece Rigoberto Tiglao told De Castro that the Cypriot government had acceded to the use of its port for the arrival of OFWs by ship but wanted a connecting flight to take out the evacuees immediately because it was the peak season for tourists in Cyprus.

From Bahrain, the OFWs will then be flown to Manila on commercial flights to be paid for by the government.

Coast Guard offer

On the proposed deployment of ships from the Philippine Coast Guard, De Castro said the task force was not too keen on this as it would take a longer travel time, was more risky and more expensive.

He said the initial cost of sending Coast Guard ships would be $1.7 million, excluding the $100,000 fee to be paid for the ship's passage through the Suez Canal, and war insurance.

He said the voyage would take at least 20 days.

The crisis team in Lebanon had been evacuating overseas Filipino workers by land through Damascus, Syria, for the past three weeks. But last Friday's Israeli bombardment of bridges between Jouniah and Tripoli towns forced the crisis team to lead a convoy of 450 OFWs through an alternate route to Damascus.

Conejos said the team could still use the alternate route but "we have to have a back-up plan" and that was the sea route either to Syria or Cyprus.

To evacuate the OFWs by sea from Beirut to Syria, the foreign undersecretary said they could do this by ferrying them out via commercial ships to the port cities of Tartous or Latakia and then to Damascus.

IOM to continue aid

The US-funded International Organization for Migration could continue to help shoulder the cost of the transport fares of the OFWs in these commercial ships and the chartered flights back home, he said.

Conejos said officials hoped to "inaugurate" this week the use of the sea route from Beirut to Cyprus. This will be an eight-hour trip and this time it will be the government that will shoulder the cost of the transport fare of these commercial ships.

The Beirut-Cyprus sea route will cost $166 per person, he said.

But Conejos said that if OFWs will be brought to Cyprus, this should be a "well-choreographed" movement because the Cyprus government only wants Manila to make sure Cyprus would only be used as a transit area and thus, wanted a plane waiting for OFWs when they disembark.

Conejos said officials were expecting that by the end of the week, they would be able to bring home 1,926 OFWs. A total of 1,449 will be brought home by the IOM while the rest with the help of the Owwa and Cebu Pacific.

700 in Beirut church

Right now, Conejos said there were 700 OFWs in the Church of Miraculous Medal in Beirut but 500 were expected to move out yesterday to Damascus.

But officials expect 200 more OFWs to seek shelter in the church yesterday.

In the case of Cebu Pacific, De Castro said Philippine Airlines had offered to bring home about 150 OFWs in Damascus using a newly acquired aircraft it will get from Germany.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, August 8, 2006
18th Week in Ordinary Time
Dominic

1st Reading: Jer 30:1-2, 12-15, 18-22
Gospel: Matthew 14:22-36

After the crowd had eaten their fill, Jesus obliged his disciples to get into the boat and go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the crowd away.

And having sent the people away, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. At nightfall, he was there alone. Meanwhile, the boat was very far from land, dangerously rocked by the waves for the wind was against it.

At daybreak, Jesus came to them walking on the lake. When they saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, thinking that it was a ghost. And they cried out in fear. But at once Jesus said to them, "Courage! Don't be afraid. It's me!" Peter answered, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you walking on the water."

Jesus said to him, "Come." And Peter got out of the boat, walking on the water to go to Jesus. But, in face of the strong wind, he was afraid and began to sink. So he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus immediately stretched out his hand and took hold of him, saying, "Man of little faith, why did you doubt?"

As they got into the boat, the wind dropped. Then those in the boat bowed down before Jesus saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God!"

They came ashore at Gennesareth. The local people recognized Jesus and spread the news throughout the region. So they brought all the sick to him, begging him to let them touch just the fringe of his cloak. All who touched it became perfectly well.

Commentary

Israel is wounded and there is no one to attend to their sores or plead their cause, but the Lord wants to restore them so that they will live and rejoice and sing once again. God wants still to be their God alone.

Jesus has fed the people and goes off to the mountain to pray while his disciples get into the boat and head out on the lake. A storm comes up and they panic. Jesus knows of their fear and comes to them walking on water and Peter braves the storm to come to Jesus. But it only takes a moment and he's sinking because he stopped looking to Jesus. Jesus saves him and pulls him out. And he continues saving people—bringing them hope, life, courage, healing. If only they could touch his cloak!

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No case vs 'Erap 4'; 1 charged

By Armand N. Nocum

THE DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE HAS FINALLY admitted that the government does not have the goods on four of the five men it arrested last May in connection with an aborted plan to assassinate top Cabinet officials of the Arroyo administration.

Last Friday, DOJ prosecutors ordered the dismissal of rebellion charges against Virgilio Eustaquio, Jim Lucio Cabauatan, Dennis Ibuna and Jose Justo Curameng for lack of probable cause, but proceeded with filing rebellion charges against suspected communist leader Ruben Dionisio.

All five had been tagged the "Erap Five" for their association with the former President who faces plunder and graft charges.

In a three-page resolution, Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco, head of the DOJ's Task Force Rebellion, said that probable cause had been established to charge Dionisio for violation of Article 134 in relation to Article 135 of the Revised Penal Code (rebellion, insurrection or coup d'état).

No bail was recommended for Dionisio.

In filing rebellion charges against Dionisio, the DOJ gave credence to the affidavit submitted by witness Arnel Alonzo, a self-confessed member of the Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army (CPP-NPA) Liquidation Squad.

In his affidavit, Alonzo claimed that the communist leadership had issued an order to assassinate certain Cabinet officials of the Arroyo administration as part of its armed struggle to overthrow the government.

Alonzo also identified Dionisio as the secretary of the CPP-NPA-Metro Manila Regional Party Committee, who is actively involved in the attempt to topple the Arroyo administration.

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Move over 'Garci,' Joc-joc is new 'star' in House impeach case

By Michael Lim Ubac

MOVE OVER "GARCI," JOC-JOC IS THE NEW "star" in the House of Representatives.

When the House justice committee opens hearings into the impeachment complaints against President Macapagal-Arroyo at 1 p.m. today, expect former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante to be in the spotlight, just as former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano was a few months ago.

BOLANTE

GARCILLANO

But Bolante won't be around to answer any questions, though, being under detention in an immigration prison in California after he tried to enter the US on July 7 with a canceled visa.

Bolante stands accused in the Senate of embezzlement and plunder of the P728-million fertilizer fund that was intended for farmers.

The fund was allegedly spread around by Bolante as largesse to the President's allies and supporters during the May 2004 election campaign.

The use of the fund in such a manner is one of the charges in the eight impeachment complaints filed in the House against Ms Arroyo this year.

At a press conference yesterday, opposition stalwarts former Vice President Teofisto Guingona and House Minority Leader Francis Escudero asked the congressmen who received some of the P728-million fertilizer fund to inhibit themselves from the impeachment proceedings on the ground of "conflict of interest."

Escudero said the legislators—even those from the minority—who benefited from the fund would not be able to "render a fair and unbiased decision."

For his part, Guingona said: "It's up to the individual congressmen to make his or her defense to show they have no conflict of interest."

The names of 29 pro-administration members of the justice committee appeared in a March 2006 Commission on Audit report as beneficiaries of the fertilizer fund.

The justice committee consists of 23 ex-officio members and 48 regular members from the majority, and 18 ex-officio members and 13 regular members from the minority.

Administration Rep. Monico Puentevella of Bacolod and Marcelino Libanan of Eastern Samar said the opposition's demand that they inhibit themselves from the proceedings was political harassment.

"Are they saying then that Bacolod City be deprived of its representation in Congress? Does this also mean that all those who signed the impeachment complaint in Congress be deprived of membership in the justice committee?" Puentevella said.

As for the over 100 congressmen who availed themselves of the fund, "shall we also deprive them? This is absurd and petty. Please don't prejudge members of the justice committee," he said.

Libanan said that going by the opposition demand, all lawmakers whose districts had benefited from development projects funded by the national government should also inhibit themselves from the impeachment proceedings.

"We have here nothing but a blatant attempt to put pressure on administration congressmen whose only sin is to work hard to bring more development projects to their districts," he said.

As for Garcillano, unlike Bolante, he appeared at a House investigation last January where he admitted talking to the President during the canvassing of votes in 2004.

He maintained, however, that there was nothing "illegal" about the phone conversations and that he was "no superman" to be able to single-handedly rig the elections, as another impeachment charge alleges the President ordered him to do.

Erap being singled out for persecution, say lawyers

By Norman Bordadora

LAWYERS FOR EX-PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada told the Sandiganbayan yesterday that they would no longer present witnesses for the defense, but would instead present documents showing that the deposed leader was being singled out for persecution.

One of the documents defense lawyer Rene Saguisag would want presented and marked in Estrada's plunder trial was a status report of the Ombudsman's investigation for graft of ex-Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante in connection with the fertilizer fund scam.

"In 2004, journalist Marlene Esperat filed a graft case against Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante. After that, she was killed. Years later, the case has yet to move," Saguisag told the special division hearing Estrada's plunder raps.

Saguisag argued that while the Ombudsman seems to be taking its time investigating the former agriculture undersecretary currently detained in the US for immigration-related issues, it acted with undue haste in charging Estrada in 2001.

"This seems to be compatible with our theory that our client was denied the equal protection of the law," the former senator said.

Saguisag would also want a certification on the status of the plunder case filed against former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez in connection with a $2-million deposit in a foreign bank.

Perez was the justice secretary at the time Estrada was charged in 2001 by then Ombudsman Aniano Desierto before the Sandiganbayan.

"It goes to show that if one is a favorite of this administration, like Secretary Nani Perez who helped Ms Arroyo in an election, the Ombudsman would not move," Saguisag said.

He added that if the Ombudsman would be able to give them the documents within the week, the defense might be able to rest its case next week.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio, meanwhile, told the court that requests for certifications on pending cases before the Ombudsman were just part of the defense's delaying tactics.

"These cases are irrelevant to the plunder trial," Villa-Ignacio said.

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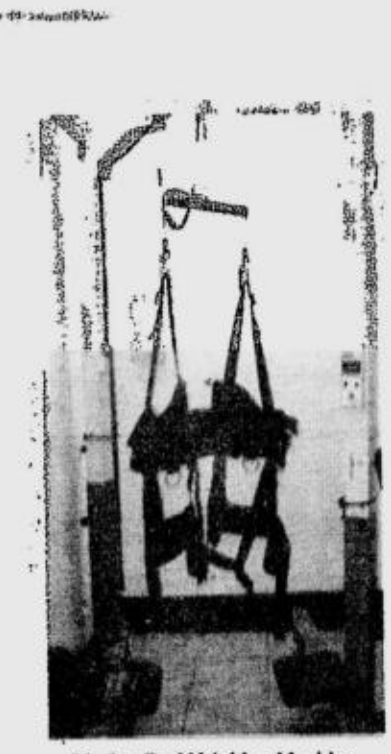
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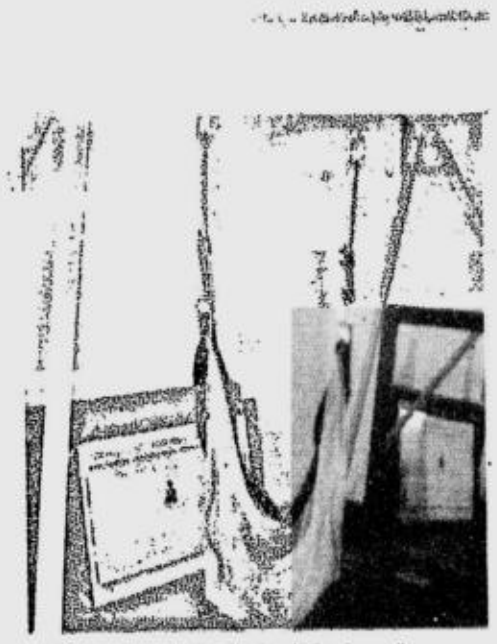
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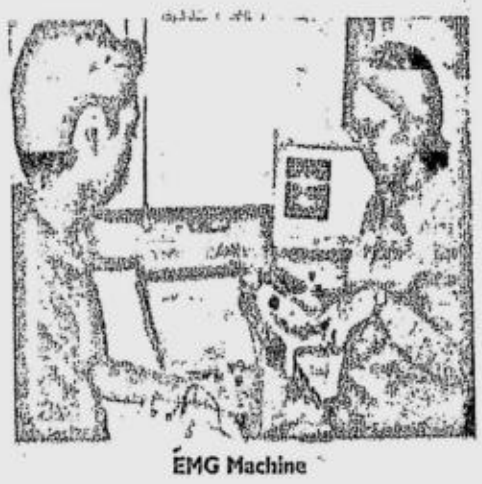
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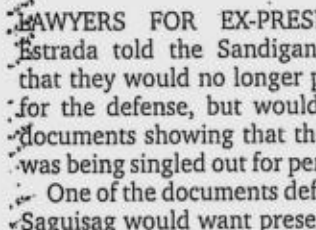
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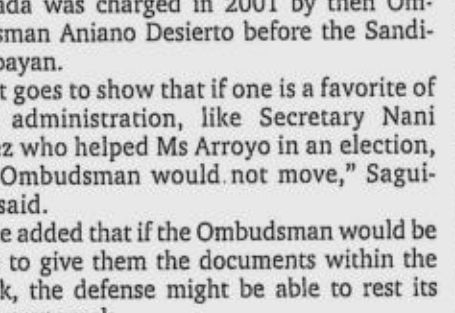
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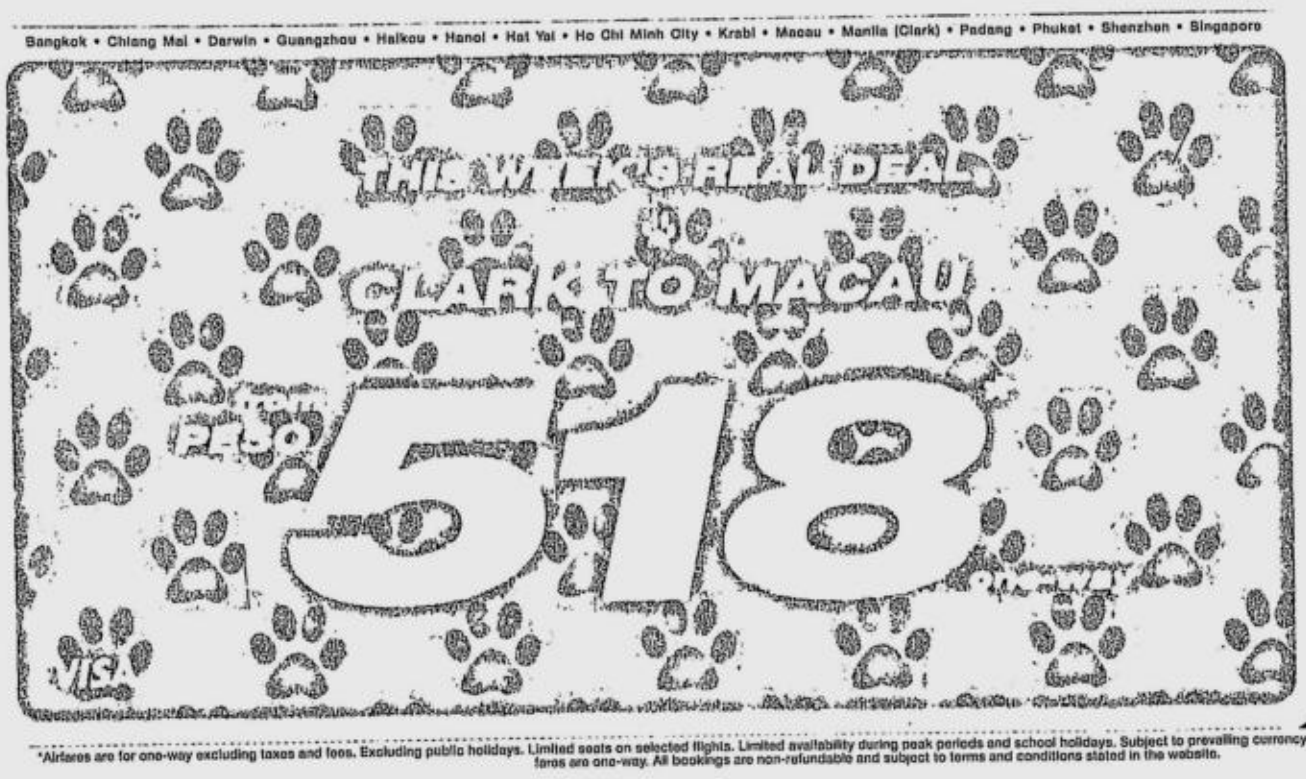

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Romulo to visit Burma, mum on Suu Kyi meet

FOREIGN SECRETARY ALBERTO ROMULO yesterday said he is visiting Myanmar (Burma) starting Friday to stress calls from the international community for the military-ruled Southeast Asian nation to start democratic reforms.

Romulo said he will meet the ruling junta in the "new capital" Naypyidaw, a two-hour ride from the former seat of government Yangoon.

He declined to say whether he will meet detained pro-democracy advocate Aung Suu Kyi, whose freedom has been demanded by the international community.

Romulo expressed optimism on his mission. "There's now light in the sky" over that path, he remarked, noting that the reclusive state has recently received UN special envoy Ibrahim Gambari, in a gesture complying with one of the major conditions in the "roadmap" to democracy. *Volt Contreras*

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In the dark

THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION, SINCE THE "Hello Garci" scandal broke, has kept government officials and ordinary citizens in the dark on controversial cases that are of national concern. It has adopted a policy of untruthfulness, obfuscation and evasion to block at every turn the attempts of officials and citizens to know the truth.

EDITORIAL

In the "Hello Garci" scandal, the administration apparently helped former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to hide either here or abroad, to avoid being summoned by a Senate investigating committee. After many months of hiding, Garcillano surfaced and appeared before the Senate committee, but he succeeded in keeping to himself any information that would have incriminated him and President Macapagal-Arroyo.

A Senate inquiry into the alleged misuse of the Department of Agriculture's P728-million fertilizer fund during the 2004 presidential election failed to elicit any information when the secretaries of agriculture, budget, agrarian reform and trade begged off the hearing, invoking Executive Order No. 464. Three former top officials, including former Agriculture Undersecretary Jocelyn Bolante, who had key roles in the release of the fund, simply didn't show up.

Bolante was later discovered to have left the country, and it was only recently that he turned up in Los Angeles where he was detained for entering the United States with an expired visa. Strangely, he has applied for asylum in the United States, claiming that the New People's Army was gunning after him, a claim that the NPA subsequently denied.

The commissioners of the Commission on Elections, headed by Chair Benjamin Abalos, are resisting investigation of the P1.3-billion Mega Pacific election computerization deal that has been voided by the Supreme Court. They say that the commissioners, who can only be removed by impeachment, may only be investigated after they are impeached.

The Senate oversight committee on labor and employment is asking where the P8.1-billion fund of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is and why the President could allocate only P150 million to repatriate the OFWs from Lebanon. Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita and seven other top officials on Aug. 1 snubbed a Senate inquiry into the "piece-meal" evacuation of OFWs and the status of the Owwa fund.

Article III, Section 7 of the Constitution says that "the right of the people to information on matters of public concern shall be recognized." Article II, Section 28 says that "subject to reasonable conditions prescribed by law, the state adopts and implements a policy of full public disclosure of all its transactions involving public interest."

The "Hello Garci" scandal, the P728-million fertilizer scandal, the P1.3-billion election computerization deal and the P8.1-billion Owwa fund are all matters involving public interest, but the Arroyo administration is preventing the people, through their duly elected representatives, from knowing the truth about them.

The right of access to information rests on the premise that it is an informed and critical public opinion which alone can protect the values of a democratic government. The provisions on the right to information were inserted by the 1986 Constitutional Commission as a reaction to the Marcos dictatorship's practice of withholding data from the public whenever such data contradicted government policies. Now, it appears, we are back to the Marcos practice of withholding vital information from the public and its representatives.

Former US President Jimmy Carter, who set up the Carter Center Access to Information Project, said that "access to information is a crucial element in the effort to reduce corruption, increase accountability and deepen trust among citizens and their governments." Laura Neuman, who edited a paper of the center on access to information, said: "Knowledge is power, and transparency is the remedy to the darkness under which corruption and abuse thrives. Democracy depends on a knowledgeable citizenry whose access to a broad range of information enables them to participate fully in public life, help determine priorities for public spending, receive equal access to justice and hold their public officials accountable."

Here, the policy is lack of transparency, evasion and subterfuge to avoid the giving of information and the disclosure of the truth. In adopting this policy, is the Arroyo administration hiding cases of corruption and abuse and avoiding accountability to the people?

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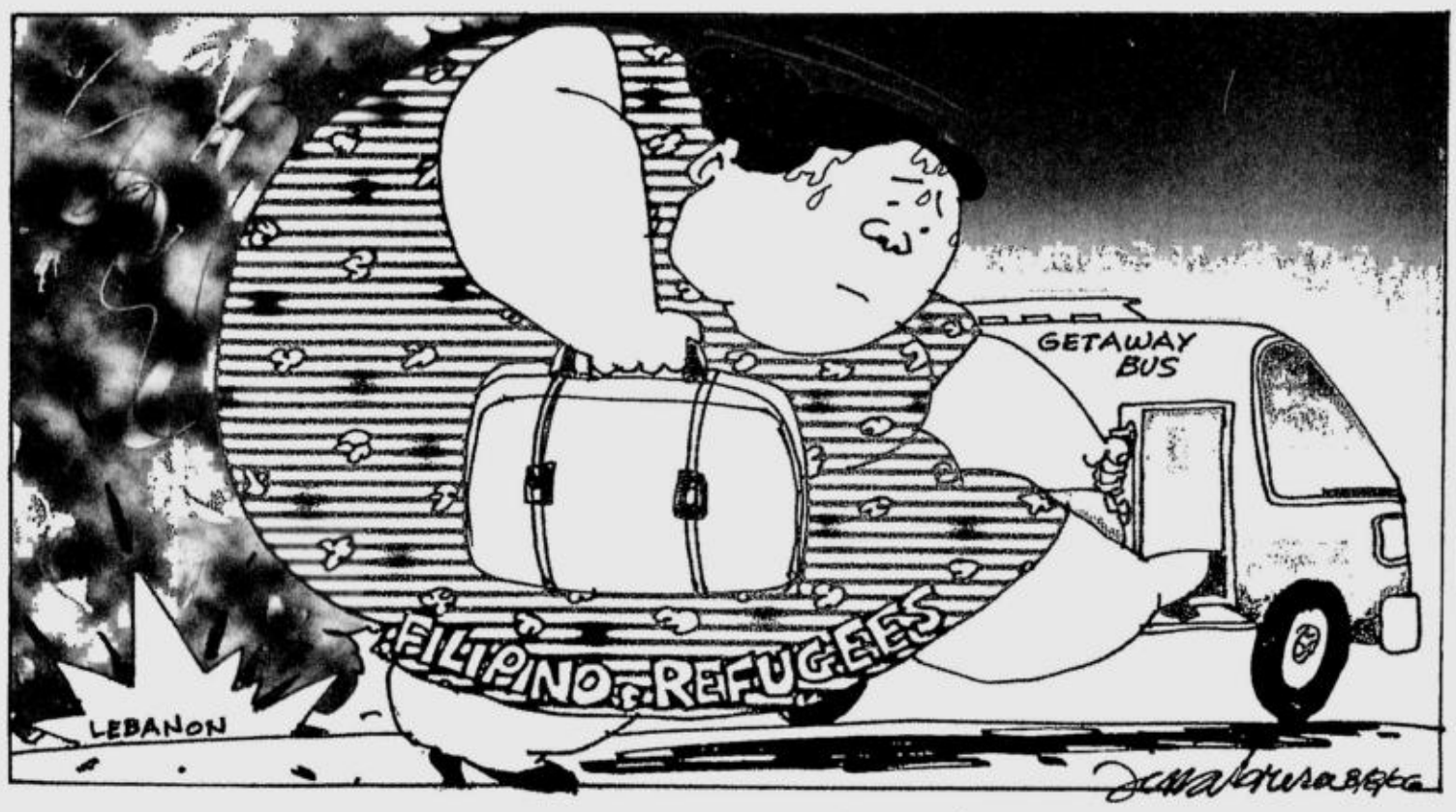

Tree on arid soil

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

AFTER A YEAR AND A HALF, A QUESTION I asked in the INQUIRER and Cebu Daily News on the "missing millions" has been answered from The Hague by an Agence France-Presse dispatch.

"Over the last two weeks, I won the lottery thrice," I wrote then. "And that excludes the seven times I hit the jackpot. So, why can't I still toss Eduardo Cojuangco a 'name-your-price offer' for coconut levy-manacled San Miguel Corp. shares?"

E-mail messages cram my mailbox telling me that I hit several gold lodes. I won one million euros in Spain's "El Gordo" (The Fat One) lottery—equal to what's waiting at Summerset International Lottery. You're a rich man, says the Euro-Foundation. I am? "You have been approved (*sic*) here for 1.5 million euros."

"I don't like millionaires," Mark Twain once wrote. "But it'd be dangerous to offer me the position."

Me too. But from Belgium, the Netherlands to the United Kingdom, they elbow each other to offer me the job. They all slobber over this instant millionaire. Or is it billionaire by now? After all, Holland's Paragon Promo and Spain's Loteria de la Primitiva say they've stashed additional cash for me.

"At this rate, don't you think I deserve a lifestyle check?" I ask our neighbor-ombudsman.

"Are you nuts?" he snaps.

But serial jackpots send images dancing across my mind. Why, I could give Erap's studentless Muslim Youth Foundation and even Ferdinand Marcos' shell foundations in Lichtenstein a run for their money. As former British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher noted, "No one would have remembered the Good Samaritan if all he had were good intentions. He had money as well."

Offers to share millions in idled funds come unasked. Mauritius "Member of Parliament" Rajesh Anand Baghwan offers a 25-percent cut. "Dr." Om Ali of the Credit Bank of Iraq has access to $14.2 million. "We'll share: 65% for me, 30% for you and 5% for any expense incured (*sic*). Dubai merchant Khalid claims he has throat cancer. "I help dispatched (*sic*) it to charity organizations. I have set aside 20% for your time."

"Would it spoil some vast eternal plan / If I were a wealthy man?" Teyve plaintively complains in the Broadway play "Fiddler on the Roof."

So, one pauses and asks: Where's the catch? All the letters are phrased identically, down to the grammatical errors. Only the amounts vary. Keep it confidential, they ask. But they will name an intermediary. "All that's required is to provide your full names (*sic*), address, private phone, fax numbers"—and oh, yes, your bank account data too. It would speed up release of the funds if you'd send a modest amount for costs in transferring.

"A fool and his money are soon parted." How many have been conned? But if the e-mail traffic is any indication, there are suckers out there, willing to be fleeced. Who said there was "one born every minute?"

Agence France Presse, in the Hague, has a partial answer with this weekend report:

"The ringleader of a Dutch-based Internet scam that raked in up to 1.67 million euros (P102 million) has been arrested in Nigeria, police said .

"The Nigerian, who headed a band of fraudsters operating out of Amsterdam, was arrested in Lagos. Twelve Nigerians were arrested in the Netherlands in February over the scam. Some were held at the request of prosecutors in the US, where most scam's victims are located.

"The fraudsters sent an estimated 140,000 e-mails per week all over the world."

They dangled quick financial gains from a make-believe inheritance or fictitious lottery wins in exchange for "processing fees."

Some call these "crimes of persuasion." But hard-boiled experts lump them as "419 fraud," referring to the relevant section in Nigeria's criminal code.

The "419" offers marched in lockstep with the advance in communication technology. First, these were offered by mail. Later, they were sent by facsimile. But the Internet has seen an explosion of offers. An estimated 250,000 are engaged in this con game.

Nigeria leads in Internet scams. Criminals in Lagos, Owerri, Aba and Port Harcourt bombard computer owners with e-mails seeking to con them with ghost schemes. Those who paid never see a penny of their down payment or the promised windfall.

The majority of Nigerians are honest. But the fact is that "the Dutch fraud squad last year estimated that at least seven Nigerian syndicates —a group of at least a hundred people—are engaged with 419 frauds from Amsterdam, making it one of the most important scam hubs of the European continent."

The US Federal Trade Commission receives "419" fraud complaints.

The lottery scams are orchestrated by Nigerians operating from boiler rooms in Amsterdam suburbs," writes Jan Libbenga in the Register. "They target ... foreigners who do not know that companies such as Fortune Trust Finance & Securities could never be housed at Burdenstreet or Alfonstraat in Amsterdam, addresses mentioned in numerous e-mails. The phone numbers, however, are real; some will even connect to a satellite phone."

Some 419 e-mail offer a fictitious "embassy" address. The Spanish Embassy in the Hague says it receives daily phone calls from people who received a message from Madrid. It informs them they've won a large Spanish lottery prize. But the "winners" are told they must first pay a gambling tax. Several paid, a spokesperson said. But none received any prize money.

Such letters titillate the avarice that cuts a fault line through the human heart. The Ilocano proverb sums it up well : "Greed is a tree that grows even on arid soil."

No. 1 recruiter of the NPA

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WITH ALL THAT BUSINESS OF THE OFWS IN dire straits in Lebanon and the OWWA money that failed to get their way, I never got to write about the horrendous killings that took place last week. I can't let that pass without bearing witness.

Frankly, I don't know what's happening to us. Three deaths were recorded Monday last week and, in Metro Manila at least, I never saw lamentations being sent to the heavens or people taking to the streets in violent protest. Is it possible we now think it's perfectly normal to butcher activists and journalists and the planet does not stop spinning on its moral axis when these things happen? Have we sunk to the level of animals, unmindful of the plight of others, concerned only with our ragged efforts to survive?

The official government propaganda is that these murderous efforts are being taken to end once and for all a scourge of democracy in a record two years' time. It is wrong on both counts: on the scourge and on the timetable.

If the current murder spree proves anything, it is that you will not find the scourge of democracy in the victims, you will find it in the perpetrators. That is patent in one of the (intended) victims on that bloody Monday, Dr. Constancio Claver, who was ambushed on the national highway in Tabuk, Kalinga, in broad daylight. Claver had just driven his 11-year-old daughter to school when the attack took place. He survived the attack but his wife, Alice, did not. Their 7-year-old daughter was unharmed but remains in shock. Claver himself was treated for multiple gunshot wounds.

Doesn't your blood just boil at this atrocity? It's the worst nightmare of all. Every time I read about someone being gunned down in front of his children, I do not think of those who die, I think of those who see them die. Psychologists say it leaves a lasting scar in the mind. I myself think it's a wound that never heals, the blood continues to spurt at unguarded moments. But for this to happen to a 7-year old! I can't see that Claver can be happy to have survived. He has been murdered several times over.

And what was his crime? Nothing more or less than to belong to Bayan Muna. Otherwise, he is a doctor who has foregone a practice in the city, or abroad, to minister to the needs of the dirt-poor of Tabuk. He is a "barefoot doctor," and one much loved by his community. Alice's burial itself drew a record 7,000 people, some from far-off villages. Grateful tribute to one who had been with them in times of adversity.

It does remind you of another barefoot doctor who spurned the call of an easy life, or indeed a luxurious one, to devote a life to tending to the wretched of the earth. He was Bobby de la Paz, whose name will continue to ring after all the other Filipino doctors here and elsewhere have become a hollow memory even to their kin. He was gunned down by Ferdinand Marcos' henchmen during martial law in the heart of Samar for the same crime as Claver. Then, as now, keeping the poor alive body and soul, flesh and spirit, was, and is, the most subversive thing in the world.

Look at the fallen, like Claver, and look at the standing, like Palparan and the multitude of grinning *trapos* assembled at the Batasan on the day Gloria presumed to tell the nation its state, and ask yourself: Who is the scourge of democracy? Claver or Gloria? Alice or Palparan? The more than 700 dead activists, many of them students in the first flush of youth, or Joe de V and his cohorts, many of them still outright crooks in the twilight of their lives?

Which brings me to the part about ending the insurgency in two years' time. That was what Marcos advertised, too, when he wreaked a bloodbath upon this earth. He succeeded only in fanning it. It is the folly of tyrants and dictators to imagine they will weaken anything they call a scourge or enemy. They merely turn the thing they call scourge into salvation, they merely turn the thing they call enemy into friend. Tyranny and dictatorship are the magic wand that turns anything they find despicable into something lofty and honorable.

It's now a crime to join Bayan Muna? Then join Bayan Muna!

What makes the killings more damnable today than during Marcos' time isn't just that Marcos was at least elected twice before he became a dictator while GMA never was before she did—though that is a humongous difference enough as it is. It is that Marcos came to power on his own while GMA became so because of us. We rested upon her shoulders our people-power dreams of a vibrant democratic life, the very thing she is now "salvaging" with abandon.

But in the end, during Marcos' time the US Department of State itself became alarmed at the strength of the insurgency, almost single-handedly fanned by Marcos himself. In the end, we ourselves will be alarmed by the fury of the insurgency, almost single-handedly resurrected by GMA herself. What the US called Marcos then, we might call GMA now:

The No. I recruiter of the NPA.

* * *

Correction: R.A. Gapuz writes to say that contrary to the news reports, they never admitted they were the source of the leak in the nursing exams in their press conference. They in fact categorically denied it.

"PRC Commissioner Renato Valdecantos affirmed our innocence ... when he emphasized ... that there was 'no evidence that it (leakage) came from them (R.A. Gapuz Review Center).' The PRC added that the leaked questions were in fact traced to two Board of Nursing officials, Ms. Anesha Dionisio and Ms. Virginia Madeja."

The case still merits a congressional inquiry, though I still maintain that Prospero Pichay and his other prosperous colleague, Prospero Nograles, are not the best persons to head it. The concept of cheating eludes them.

'Ikaw, ano ang OTOP mo?'

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE SENATE'S KNEE-JERK REACTION IS TO call for an inquiry or hearing. This is what Senators Jinggoy Estrada, Panfilo Lacson and Richard Gordon want to do with regard to Owwa funds, even if the government is desperately trying to evacuate Filipino workers from Lebanon on account of the escalating war. There ought to be more circumspection as there are urgent matters for Congress to attend to. One is the much-needed review of the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira). I join the clamor of business leaders for its review in the light of the cancellation of the sale of the Masinloc power plant to YNN Pacific Consortium and President Macapagal-Arroyo's call to lower power rates for big consumers.

One of those pressing for review is former President Fidel Ramos, who had an interesting face-off with his former rival, Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago. She called a Senate hearing to look into reports that FVR had influenced the sale of the power plant to an under-capitalized foreign firm with ties to Malaysian politicians. FVR skillfully handled the Senate show, but more important is his observation that Epira is "basically defective" and that in its present form, it will not make the privatization of Napocor assets easy. This explains perhaps why the government has been unable to unload them in order to further trim the budget deficit.

* * *

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño has also said that Epira needs to be amended to prevent officials from collecting kickbacks from the sale of assets. Casiño charged that PSALM officials received P10 million in bonuses for the "successful" sale of Masinloc. With the cancellation of the $562-million sale, he said, these officials "should be ashamed of themselves" and return the "bonus" as that is taxpayers' money. In the first place, why should there be a "bonus" for officials who are simply doing their jobs? Secondly, did the officials involved in the deal collect the bonus even if the $227 million down payment from YNN was never delivered, despite, three deadline extensions? This failure led to Congress' recommendation to cancel the sale.

* * *

Cecile Alvarez and I featured last Sunday on our dzRH program Trade Undersecretary Carissa Cruz-Evangelista, whom our colleague Rina Jimenez-David recently referred to in her column as "Miss OTOP." The youthful undersecretary couldn't be more flattered by the reference, for OTOP is an acronym that she hopes would catch fire throughout the country. Soon bumper stickers will come out with the query, "*Ikaw, ano ba ang OTOP mo?*" and there will be 30 second ads on TV featuring celebrities like Lea Salonga, Boy Abunda, Jackie Forster and Cutie Del Mar endorsing OTOP. The acronym refers to "One Town One Product," a program to encourage small and medium enterprises to manufacture products they could claim as their own distinct contribution to the economy. OTOP also aims to stimulate the pride of each region in its own products and indigenous resources, forge government and private partnership and encourage thousands of new entrepreneurs.

* * *

The program is patterned after the "One Village One Product" program of Japan, which was copied successfully by Thailand in its "One Town One Product" campaign. As Evangelista explained, the DTI Regional Operations Group she heads has already scanned more than 89 percent of the towns whose outstanding products can be pushed for OTOP. These include the *abel Iloko* weave and *chichacorn* of Ilocos, citrus of Nueva Vizcaya, slippers of Gapan City, paper maché of Laguna, buhi hand-weave of Camarines Sur, sandals of Carcar, mussels of Samar, processed and fresh mangoes of Sarangani, and coffee of Kalinga and Cavite. Duly accredited products will be given the OTOP brand, much like a "good housekeeping" seal. Financing will be provided if needed along with design and packaging, and marketing. As Evangelista noted, the ultimate goal is to export, principally targeting Pinoy overseas communities, but only when the SMEs are ready. It's also good to remember, she said, that not everyone can be an exporter, but perhaps an agricultural supplier or a local retailer.

Evangelista announced that the first OTOP Luzon Island Trade Fair will kick off on Aug. 16 at Megatrade Halls 2 and 3 of the SM Megamall, where products of the eight regions and 37 provinces of Luzon will be on display and sale. That looks like a good chance to buy goods one doesn't see in supermarket shelves.

* * *

Retrouvaille Philippines, the worldwide Catholic ministry dedicated to helping troubled marriages, will hold its third-quarter weekend healing program for 2006 from Friday evening, Aug. 11, to Sunday afternoon, Aug. 13, at the Mother of Mercy Spiritual Center, SVD Road, Tagaytay City. Retrouvaille has helped reconcile many married couples in the midst of ailing relationships. Inquiries may be addressed to Fr. Eli Santos at 0918-921-0184 or 822-3614; or Nes and Inday, 0916-443-8346 and 938-9719, or Raymond and Zeny, 0917-822-0115. All calls are treated confidentially.

* * *

The next in a series of lectures on management development, titled "Quest for Innovative Solutions," will be held on Thursday, Aug. 10, by the Management Association of the Philippines from 9 to 11:30 a.m. at the Conservatory of the Manila Peninsula Hotel. With recognized industry leaders as speakers and moderators, the series seek to review current practices, explore alternative approaches to management and strategy and evolve more innovative approaches. MAP president Evelyn Singson and Dr. Nick Poblador, MAP project manager for this series, are inviting middle to top-level managers, human resource management practitioners and business school academics and administrators. Call the MAP secretariat at 751-1149 to 52.

Sensible spending

TO SPEND OR NOT TO SPEND IS NOT THE QUESTION. The question is: "Do we have cash?" If the answer is yes, then we have what is called a budget. Money is not the root of all evil and spending is not the devil's leisure. You can actually use the money to make the world a better place, and I'm not just referring to donating cash to charity. Hey, buying a deodorant spares the world from more evil. Be happy every time you see somebody purchase one.

YOUNG BLOOD

Frances Paola G. Doplon

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

Spending is a reality of 21st century living. It hurts every now and then, but there are ways to make spending a joy. Sensible spending refers to purchasing real (not imagined) needs and licit wants within one's budget without compromising quality.

If you have the cash and the need is not imaginary, go ahead and buy what you need. Yeah, times are hard and there are many people dying of hunger, but if you don't buy that much needed pair of shoes, how can you work for progress without being distracted by swollen toes? If you have cologne to spray on for the job interview, how can a sweaty you join the labor force that drives the country's economy? If you don't get that haircut, how do you expect to be nominated for a promotion that may ease your family's financial burden?

So take away that false guilt and acquire your real needs. Of course, modesty requires that we do not splurge on luxury items as if the poor never existed. Keep in mind that many people depend on a healthy, presentable and happy you.

Remember, sensible spending is not a sin.

Aware of the huge amount of cash I unload from my potential and current savings for the many things I have to purchase these days (transport, clothing, readings, etc.), I always say to my friends, "I don't spend, I invest." Always think of each expense as an investment in your future. This way, you will be able to wisely judge what you spend on. Purchasing a P1,500 pair of shoes that will last for a year is better than buying a P199 peso pair that is bound to break into pieces in two months. Just think of the time, stress, and, again, money involved in shoe hunting!

Should I photocopy from the library or should I purchase the book? Examine how much you will be using the text in the near and distant future before you decide.

Accounting for your assets and liabilities is part of wealth management. Good businessmen know how much they have invested, lost and gained. In the same way, it is advisable to jot down your expected income, your budget, your projected expenses, and your savings. Try to log daily your personal expenses down to the last centavo so that you know how much you have spent on certain items. Maybe you would discover that you could have bought that cute shirt on sale if you hadn't consumed so much iced tea. Maybe you would discover that you would save more time and money by taking the long sunrise bus trip instead of taking the bus and the MRT. Maybe you would discover that you incur serious financial losses because of the fuel needed to drive your girlfriend around the metropolis.

Also check your list of life priorities (this is the same list of what's worth spending/investing on). If God is No. 1 in your life, then it's worthwhile to pay the activity fee for a retreat. If your loved ones are No. 2, then it's worthwhile to treat them to dinner and invest in creating for them happy memories.

A friend was running low on cash and trying to decide whether she'd buy *panotsa* as *pasalubong*. She finally made up her mind saying, "*Sige na nga bibili na 'ko, love ko naman si Papa* (Okay, I'll buy it because I love Papa)."

Remember, each expense should be an investment.

There's a good reason why the head is located above the heart. It symbolizes how things should be. We have a choice and we decide which overrules which, but man is built in such a way that the intellect rightly dominates passions and emotions. When the emotions rule, the heart is above the head. Our whole world seems to turn upside-down because we are upside-down. This reality about who we are permeates our every action—including shopping.

Don't be an emotional spender and waste the fruit of your labor senseless spending. You'll regret it. When the need arises, you will remember the day you splurged on a pint of ice cream out of caprice or vanity. Always keep the end in mind, and consider each purchase as an investment for your future or for the future of a loved one.

Do branded items really last longer? Wrong question! Ask instead what's the brand. If the brand has a reputation for durability, then it definitely is a good buy. I once thought that branded items lasted longer. I was wrong. In principle, expensive items should last longer, but that's just in principle. I've had P1,500 shoes ripping off at the strangest times or accumulating scratches that don't belong to what is claimed to be genuine leather. Prior to shopping, observe, ask friends what brand they use. Better yet, ask what material the item is made of. If you know how to to identify materials, no false tag or high price can fool you.

Bargain shopping is fine. It's funny to see each *tiangge* stall having items similar to the stall beside it! Just be careful with the details of the materials so that they last longer. To be sure, bring someone along so that you can get a second objective opinion on your purchase. Two heads are better than one! If he or she is obsessive-compulsive, good for you.

Remember the three things that make make your spending experience a real joy. First, sensible spending is not a sin. Second, each expense is an investment. Third, each purchase is executed in the mind before the hand reaches for the wallet. When you keep all these in mind, your expenses will not be a violation of social justice. Spend wisely, cheerfully and modestly!

Frances Paola G. Doplon, 24, is taking up graduate studies in Anglo-American Literature at the University of the Philippines, Diliman.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with. Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

Celebrating 'Rainbow Families'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

FROM MONTREAL, ANNA LEAH SARABIA writes of events at the First World Outgames and the annual gay festival DiverCité and reflects on the contrast between living in a society that embraces the "Rainbow Community" and one where differences in sexual orientation are not only condemned but actually penalized with discrimination, ostracism and even outright violence.

The following article was edited only for brevity.

* * *

FAMILY. Our constitution says it's the basic unit of society. But today, all over the world, the family has become the battleground for the recognition of the human rights of people who are considered fallen from the *sagrada familia* prototype.

It wasn't always this way. We still acknowledge the strong influence of our expanded families—the vertical lines up to grandparents, grandaunts and granduncles, as well as the horizontal lines including people who are not even blood relatives. Filipino families, despite the 500 years of patriarchal colonization, have not downgraded the importance of our maternal lineage: the mother still holds sway inside most families, especially because people take for granted that fathers can easily leave or die ahead of mothers.

In short, the "self-contained" nuclear family—father, mother and children—being promoted as the basic unit is a concept imposed by men who wish to continue holding the reins of their own domain. So neither should it be the only definition of family, now that solo parents, childless couples and even parentless children of OFWs have become reality for at least 46 percent of our people.

And yet, the nuclear family is being used all over the world as the defense of hard-core conservatives against the recognition of same-sex marriages. It's taboo, unthinkable, a disgrace—much worse, perhaps, than a Jew and a Muslim getting married, or, as late as the 1960s, an African-American and a Caucasian having children together.

The civil rights movement struck down discriminatory laws and customs in most societies. Non-discrimination on the basis of race or religion—together with other forms of xenophobia—are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Inter-racial marriages have become so common today that soon half of the people in most mobile societies (like ours) will have blood from multiple races flowing in their veins.

* * *

UNFORTUNATELY, strong prohibitions are being raised against non-heterosexual couples. As scientific research and personal realizations have led the World Health Organization, the American Psychological Association and other like bodies to recognize that sexual attraction between people who are not of "opposite" sexual identities is actually normal, non-heterosexuals are still being persecuted for falling in love with, and wanting to marry, the wrong person.

The biggest bogey being used—even in UN Ecosoc debates—to justify continued discrimination of non-heterosexual people is the fear of pedophiles. The argument is that if we do not prevent gays from expressing themselves, there will be an epidemic of pedophilia. But we in the women's movement have seen that the known cases of pedophilia in history have involved heterosexuals and even supposed celibates (aka priests).

Lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender and intersex people worldwide, however, have decided to "come out," reclaim their self-respect and dignity, and proclaim their right to love freely and consensually, and ultimately to raise children like any normal human being. They know the risks involved, but LGBT parents have empowered themselves and their families with love and care. Because if we do not take the first steps, how will the rest of the world learn to behave as humans towards Rainbow Families?

Children with two dads or two moms may be treated differently, harassed and victimized by straight adults and their children. New research has documented how some children of lesbians and gays have shown shame and depression because they were bullied, taunted and laughed at in schools where anti-gay discrimination was allowed. But in schools where a diversity of family types is recognized, or where students' parentage is not given much importance, children with two loving and caring parents—regardless of gender —fare just as well or even better than their peers.

* * *

LAST Sunday, the city of Montreal and its LGBT community demonstrated to 1,526 international LGBT human rights conference participants, and more than 12,000 Outgames visitors, this respect for LGBT parents and families.

At noon, a picnic by the lake of scenic Mont Royal Park brought hundreds of "same-same but different" moms and dads and their children—from previous straight marriages, or birthed, nurtured and raised by them. Hotdogs, chips, ice-cream and soda were distributed in between Frisbees, rainbow ball catches and kite-flying, and easy conversation.

It had been unusually humid and rainy in Montreal during the week, but last Sunday (July 30) the wind was free and the skies clear. In the evening, the city—with the Montreal mayor, his wife and official family—gathered at Le Village de Montreal to watch for the participants of the Annual Pride Parade. I walked at the beginning of the march, together with the Associacion des Meres Lesbiennes, or the Lesbian Mothers Association, joined by other mothers and grandmothers from Japan, Ecuador, the Netherlands, the United States and France. Everywhere, whoops, whistles and applause welcomed us as we crossed the Parade Route. Even the Asian community of Montreal, straight people, children and LGBT members, showed up with pride and cheered for us. It was as if the crowds hugged us all in that breezy summer night. No, it wasn't a dream.

Nato to Lebanon–but on one condition

WORLD VIEW

Christoph Bertram

THE CURRENT DISCUSSION SURROUNDING an international force for southern Lebanon has focused almost exclusively on which countries and organizations—Nato, the European Union, the United Nations—will provide the troops. This is an important issue, to be sure, but the real question concerns the changes that Israel must undertake in exchange for this force being put in place and assuming the risk of such a mission.

No international force will simply protect Israel from Hezbollah rockets while Israel continues its current strategy. After all, the recent military escalation in the region is at least partly due to that strategy. If an international force simply allows Ehud Olmert's government to pursue its plans further, the countries that provide troops for the international force will not only be seen as rubberstamping Israeli policy, but will also be dragged into its failure.

To criticize Israel's strategy as flawed is not to condone the acts of Hamas or Hezbollah or to deny Israel's right to self-defense. It is merely to point out what should be obvious: Israel's efforts to find a unilateral solution to its security problems—whether occupation, withdrawal, or separation—have failed.

Unilateral occupation without commitment to a viable Palestinian state has produced only the intifada and suicide bombers. Unilateral withdrawal from Gaza without the prior establishment of a local authority to maintain order has only led to renewed intervention. And the "security fence," which was to allow for unilateral separation, may hold back suicide bombers but not modern missiles of the kind currently employed by Hezbollah.

So far, the only lesson Israel seems to have drawn from its failed strategies is that it must extend and intensify the use of unilateral force: reinvade Gaza, devastate Lebanon, and threaten Syria and, by implication, Iran, which the Israeli government hints, had a hand in orchestrating the recent crisis.

> It takes little foresight, however, to predict that more force will not produce more security for Israel

It takes little foresight, however, to predict that more force will not produce more security for Israel. The policy, reminiscent of terrorist stratagems, of bombing civilians in order to force the hands of their leaders will only strengthen the radicals and boost their popular support. It will not hide the fact that Israel has run out of unilateral options.

Israel has so far been unwilling to accept this fact. Instead, its leaders hope that a robust international force in southern Lebanon will provide protection for northern Israel, leaving them with a free hand to deal unilaterally with Gaza and the West Bank, while committing the international community to Israel's failed unilateralism.

To join such an international force under these conditions would be irresponsible. Countries that contribute troops would appear to be siding unequivocally with Israel, thereby losing all credibility with Israel's adversaries. They would also risk being drawn into renewed Israeli operations against Hezbollah and its backers. Most important, they would forego what may be the last chance to promote a consensual peace.

So the prior condition for setting up and joining an international force for Southern Lebanon must be that Israel renews its commitment to the "road map" and negotiations with the Palestinians for a viable Palestinian state. With this aim in mind, it must enter into talks with democratically elected Palestinian representatives. True, such talks will be difficult, and they may not succeed. But that can no longer be an argument against diplomacy now that Israeli unilateralism has once again proven to be a strategic blind alley.

Only an Israel seriously willing to seek security through agreement, not one that wants to impose her security on her neighborhood by fiat, can be partner to an international effort to bring stability to Lebanon and beyond. Of course, some countries, not least the US, would oppose making such a reversal in Israeli policy a condition of creating an international force and consensus in NATO, the EU, or the UN may not be found or, if it were to emerge, Israel might simply refuse to abide.

Both prospects would be reason enough for staying away from the project altogether. Creating an international force for southern Lebanon makes sense only as an investment in regional peace, not as an appendix to Israel's current strategy.

Project Syndicate

Christoph Bertram is the former director of the German Institute for International and Security Affairs (SWP).

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Criminals in uniform

I'M CALLING THE ATTENTION OF THE PUBlic and proper authorities to acts of harassment and brutality committed in most likelihood by agents of law.

Last year, my son, a sophomore at the UP College of Law, was falsely charged by the National Bureau of Investigation—through the machinations of a despicable law fraternity—of a crime though he was not at the scene of the crime. The Quezon City fiscal's office ruled he was positively identified as "one of the masked men who attacked" the victim. Even non-lawyers consider this as a most stupid ruling. A fiscal, on condition of anonymity, confided to me there was an order from the "DOJ Manila" to prosecute my son. We had to post bail in the amount of around P200,000 and my son was forced to take a leave of absence from the law school.

Fortunately, in June 2006, Judge Luisito Cortez of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court dismissed the criminal case against my son. I thought we were past the problem.

But on last Aug. 1, a person who identified himself as Leo Asuncion of LBC appeared at our residence claiming that he had a package and money for my son. Since my son was out, he said that he would be back the next day. My wife called LBC and was told that it had no employee by the name of Leo Asuncion.

The next day, another person, dressed as an LBC courier, came to "personally" deliver a package for my son. So we let him inside the house. But once inside, he identified himself as a policeman with a warrant of arrest for my son. He refused to identify himself and his unit.

I asked him to go outside where he was joined by five other men in plainclothes, each with gun tucked inside their shirts, all bent on arresting my son. A shouting match ensued in full view of my neighbors. I called the Quezon City Police and the help of two TV stations, hoping that the rogue cops would be caught in the act.

The Quezon City police never responded. Likewise, no TV crew arrived. I guess that the story of rogue cops arresting innocent people is not newsworthy anymore.

The criminal cops eventually left in a civilian vehicle with plate no. TIP 294. According to the village security guards, one of them presented an ID with the name Romeo Ortega and that they claimed to be from the Warrant Section of the Karingal police headquarters in Quezon City.

The fact that the criminal case against my son had already been dismissed made any subsequent arrest pursuant to his case illegal per se. The fact that the cops who tried to effect the illegal arrest posed as LBC couriers made their act malicious.

I am appealing to the head of the Philippine National Police to investigate this incident and apply the most severe sanctions against the rogue cops who harassed us in our house. When the police themselves are the criminals, nobody is safe. Every time I see a policeman, I see a criminal in uniform.

—EDGARDO M.MADRIAGA,
6 Beaterio St., New Intramuros Village,
Quezon City

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Baseless opposition to Barbo's appointment

THIS HAS REFERENCE TO THE SERIES OF INQUIRER articles on the selection of lawyer Lutgardo F. Barbo as president of the Philippine Normal University.

I am not a relative or a friend of Barbo. I only want to point out the inconsistencies and bias of those who oppose Barbo's appointment.

The protestors initially claimed that Barbo was nominated and then appointed PNU president at the instance of a former high-ranking official of the Department of Education. This apparently has no basis in fact. The secretary of education is not a member of the board of trustee or regents, unless otherwise provided for in the enabling act of the state college or university. It is the chair of the Commission on Higher Education who sits as presiding officer of the board. Even granting that Dr. Minda Sutaria were a member of the PNU search committee, she could not have voted, much less influenced, the majority decision of the board.

The protestors blamed the board for having selected Barbo over "two highly qualified candidates." In her column, Rina Jimenez-David also said "that mathematically inclined protestors have re-computed the scores and say that Barbo actually ranked last among the five candidates." Still, the board in its decision on July 8, 2006 affirmed Barbo's selection as president.

The protestors further claimed that Barbo is not qualified as he is only a lawyer and not a doctoral degree holder which the Civil Service Commission requires for a level 4 university like the PNU. The CSC qualification standards include educational attainment, experience, eligibility and others. Barbo, as far as his educational qualification is concerned, meets the minimum requirement. The case of Barbo, a lawyer selected president of a state university, has a precedent. Edgardo Angara was selected president of the University of the Philippines. UP officials and students did not protest his appointment.

—LAUREANO G. LUMAGBAS,
retired school head,
Southern Samar College
of Agriculture,
Science & Technology,
Salcedo, Eastern Samar

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Why are gov't men in order of battle?

WHY INCLUDE GOVERNMENT employees in the military's order of battle? Is the demand for a P3,000 across-the-board salary increase, security of tenure and the ouster of corrupt officials and employees now an act of destabilization against the Arroyo administration?

We deplore the shocking murder last July 6 of Pax Diaz, regional chair of Courage-Eastern Visayas. The killing is quite alarming to the public sector unions. During the stints of Presidents Aquino, Ramos and Estrada, Courage officers could organize and go about their union activities freely. Although they experienced harassment by management, nothing violent was committed.

It's quite different now. Though Courage is very much legal and has been operating within the bounds of law, it has not been spared from the dreaded Oplan Laya of the military. In Eastern Visayas, Courage leaders have been tagged as enemies of the state, put under military surveillance and harassed.

How can they effectively discharge their governmental functions when every minute, be they in the office, in the streets or in their homes, they fear that hooded men, riding motorcycles sans plate numbers, would suddenly gun them down? They are non-combatants, they have families and siblings to feed with their meager incomes.

I hope and pray fervently that the officials of the Arroyo administration, especially those who participated in the First Quarter Storm, Edsa I and Edsa II, would practice the ideals they stood for and convince the National Security Council to free Courage from Red-baiting.

—LUCIANO L. ABIA IV,
PIO, DAR-Eastern Samar,
Borongan, Eastern Samar

'Job orders' working at Owwa

I BELIEVE THIS IS A GOOD TIME to finally bring this matter to the attention of people who wield great power in our government. While the politicians are riding on the Lebanon crisis for media mileage and blaming the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration for the slow evacuation, perhaps, they also ought to know that there are many Owwa employees who are considered merely as "JOs" (job orders).

We JOs perform our duties and responsibilities faithfully even though we are not regular Owwa employees; even though we are not being compensated as befits our educational attainment, civil service eligibility and/or service record; even though we are holding positions that are key to the proper delivery of Owwa services.

We urge Labor Secretary Arturo Brion to look into this matter, as we also have our own families to feed, so that we may at least have security of tenure. To Owwa Administrator Marianito Roque, please fix the plantilla of the personnel, assign the people to where they should be reporting for work.

Lastly, we appeal to President Macapagal-Arroyo to please lift the ban on the hiring of new government personnel.

—CARLOS VALERON,
cvaleronfutbolfuego@yahoo.com

Grandiose infra projects draw funders

AFTER READING THE VARIOUS commentaries and reactions to President Macapagal-Arroyo's latest State of the Nation Address, I was reminded of the story of "The Little Red Hen," a folktale my mother used to read to me when I was of pre-kindergarten age.

Belittling the administration's roadmap to economic recovery and take-off, even ascribing ill motives to it—and pointing out the absence of funds to finance what they called an "ambitious" plan—the critics all seem to have forgotten how past administrations had funded grandiose infrastructure projects—e.g., the geothermal power plants in Tiwi, Albay and Tongonan, Leyte, the Malampaya gas field off Palawan, the NorthRail project, the MRT/LRT commuter-train lines, the Skyway, Nlex, Slex and Naia Terminal 3, among many other projects.

The government did not have all the funds when these projects were started; but government corporations, the private sector, multinationals, foreign investors, commercial banks and international financial institutions came in to take up the slack in these projects. One need not be a genius to think of this. But people with deviant and devious minds can very well mislead and divert the discussion to something else.

For instance, INQUIRER columnist Amando Doronila attaches political and survival motives to a medium-term economic development plan long hatched by GMA before 2004 and implemented soon after her election in May of that year.

We even have Bishop Antonio Tobias now preaching economics! I might as well take the lectern to lecture on celibacy.

These are the ducks, the dogs, the cats in the Filipino farm.

—VICTOR N. ARCHES II,
179 Pilar Street, Addition Hills,
San Juan, Metro Manila

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				Dream Music Videos	V League				Sentro	World's Most Amazing Videos	TNA Impact		Ultimate Guinness World Records		Big News	ALI			
ABS-CBN 2		Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Zenki	Yakitate! Japan	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning		Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	Correspondents	Mirada De Mujer
AXN		Lost (Season II)		Lost (Season II)		The Ultimate Fighter		Pensacola (Season II)		The Amazing Race 7		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Alias (Season IV)		CSI NY (Season 2)		Rescue Me (Season II)	
Cartoon Network	Pixie & Dixie/ My Little Pony	All New Popeye Show	I am Weasel	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack/ Sayonara Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny/ Shaman King	The Simpsons/ Courage The Cowardly Dog	Teen Titans/ The Grim Adventures Of Billy & Mandy	Justice League Unlimited/ The Simpsons	The Batman/ Aqua Teen Hunger Force/ Sealab 2021	X-Men Evolution/ Gundam Seed	Static Shock/ Shaman King
Cinema One		Mortal Sin				Bulaklak Ng Maynila				Pa-Siyam				John En Marsha '86	Commandments			Minsan May Isang Puso	
Cinemax				Buffalo Soldiers (4:05 PM)			Firefox (5:45 PM)					Friday The 13th: A New Beginning						S.W.A.T. (10:55PM)	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Dominick Dunne's Power, Privilege & Justice		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	Body Of Evidence	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Surface		E-Ring		Law & Order: Criminal Intent	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-Bakable Bunny	Mickey Mouseworks	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			Wicked Science Yr 2	Phil Of The Future	Buzz on Maggie	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN			Extreme Programming South Asia 2005/07		Winter X-Games X - Day 1 Part 1			Major League Baseball Saturday						Sportscenter Asia	Pool Snooker Premier Snooker League '05				Sportscenter Asia
ETC	Insider Weekend	Project Runway 2		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		One Tree Hill 3		The O.C.3		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen (DeGeneres) Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Skating With Celebrities		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	Super Saints	Chaplet Of Mercy Angelus	ABCatholic	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Mirror Of The Soul	Lord, Have Mercy	Behold the Man: Spirituality for Men	The Journey Home Encore		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	The Good Code: The Natural Law	Cenacle Of Divine Mercy	Octavia Dies	Web Of Faith	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	And Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Bakay Mo Ba '07			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		Strong Medicine (3:15 PM)						McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		The 10th Kingdom		Judging Amy					Judging Amy (11:25PM)
HBO			Fireball 2015 A.D. (3:45 PM)				Caddyshack			Layer Cake (7:15 PM)				Entourage 05: The Script And The Sherpa	Entourage 06: Busey And The Beach (9:25 PM)	Alfie			Thoughtcrimes (11:40PM)
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Sorcerer Hunter	Soul Hunters	Lost Universe	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Sorcerer Hunter
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Sports On The Go	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		EBC Earth Files		Japan Video Topics/ Arms		Travel Philippines	Japan Video Topics/ Arms	EBC Earth Files	IBC News Tonite	Home Shopping Network	
JackTV		Smackdown				X-Men Evolution	Justice League	Bottomline		Mad TV		That 70s Show	Just For Laughs	My Name Is Earl	Always Sunny In Philadelphia	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Comedy Central	The Late Show David Letterman	
Lifestyle Network	Designer Remix	30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	At Home With	Emeril Live		Boy Meets Grill	El News Weekend		Look For Less	Martha		Napa Style	Sheila Bridges: Designer Living	Guess Who's Coming To Decorate	
MTV Philippines		Pimp My Ride	Cribs		MTV Hits					Get Spotted		TRL		Pimp My Ride	Cribs				
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYX Versions	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Top Of The Pops	Radio MYX	MYX News	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	National Geographic Specials		Marine Machines		Hidden Worlds: India's Odor Paradise		Top 5 - Hijack		WOW! Be the Creature Expedition Coastal Creature		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Crash Scene Investigation Green Ferry Disaster		Spirit Talk: Diva Mummy	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports Alas			Diyos Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Sila?	Teledyaryo W/ Ray Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Tamang Daan		News Beat (Live)		Openline (Live)	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Pagbubunyag		World Report	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	DWTV Journal News	Auto Motor
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants/ Right On Top	My Life As A Teenage Robot	All Grown Up	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			Sugo				Tol Ako Naman				Magkasangga Sa Batas				Ikaw Lamang Hanggang Ngayon				Sharon One Night Only
Qtv	Goodluck	Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Damo	Project 11	Na-Scam Ka Na Ba?		News On Q	Sana'y Muling Makapiling		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	North Shore		Australia's Next Top Model		Jake In Progress	Sex & the City	Newswatch Now	Tuesday Night Treat		
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Kasaganahan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports		2006 Jones Cup				NBC Badminton				World Pool 2006 Masters		USAB World Tour: USA vs. BRAZIL				Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	Indonesia Open: WS	
Sports Plus				This Is The PGA Tour		World Game		All-State 400 Highlights		RM Softball	Nopi Tunervision	Ultimate Fighting Championship				World Poker Tour Hollywood Home			
Star Movies			Parenthood (3:20 PM)				Mozart And The Whale			Opening Night: The Anti-Bully	The Gauge (7:25 PM)			Saw			Blue Crush (10:45PM)		
Star World	Becker	The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Life As We Know It		One Tree Hill		Kevin Hill		Seinfeld	Life As We Know It
Studio 23	Bewitched	Naruto				Batman Beyond	Monkey Typhoon	Spirits	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	Andromeda		Smallville (8:20 PM)	Gilmore Girls (9:10PM)		News Central	Oprah		Men's Room

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Across the NATION

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9 battalions pursuing 50 Sayyaf men

PASSENGERS raise their shirts for weapons inspection at a road block manned by Philippine Marines in Indanan, Sulu, where government soldiers are pursuing Indonesian terror suspects and members of the Al-Qaida linked Abu Sayyaf group. AFP

PATIKUL, SULU—THE MILITARY YESTERDAY said there are more foreign terrorists hiding in the province than previously thought.

Brig. Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino, deputy chief of the Southern Command, said the military has confirmed the presence of a third Indonesian identified only as Jandala.

Dolorfino said Jandala "moves around fully covered" but little is known about the Indonesian terror suspect.

On July 31, the military launched its most ambitious action yet against foreign terrorists and Abu Sayyaf bandits in the province.

Dolorfino said among the military's "high-value targets" were Bali bombing suspects Dulmatin and Omar Patek and Abu Sayyaf leaders Khadaffy Janjalani, Isnilon Hapilon and Abu Sulaiman. The terrorists, according to Dolorfino, carry a total of $26 million in reward.

Since day one of the operation in Indanan town, civilian authorities said hundreds of families have already been displaced and that they were expecting more people to flee as the military deployed additional troopers.

Dolorfino confirmed that the total military force in Indanan alone has grown to nine battalions or approximately 4,500 troops.

The military is also intensively using its air and naval capabilities against the terrorists.

Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon has admitted that the military operation in the province, dubbed as Oplan Ultimatum, might last longer than expected.

But he said the military was winning as more bandits were being killed or captured.

Since clashes began on Aug. 1, the military has reported that seven bandits, including ranking Abu Sayyaf leader Ismin Sahiron, had been slain.

Sahiron, a son of Radulan Sahiron, allegedly took over his ailing father's group.

Navy forces also arrested four suspected bandits.

A civilian acting as guide to the soldiers was killed while seven soldiers were injured.

Brig. Gen. Juancho Sabban, commander of the 3rd Marine Brigade, said they were running after about 50 bandits and Indonesian terror suspects in Indanan.

But Sabban said even with the small number of people they were trying to capture, the battle is taking longer because "they have split into small groups."

"Some of them are still in the Bud Tumatangis area in Barangay Kagay but we are receiving reports that other groups are heading toward Patikul," Sabban said.

He said the military was confident it would eventually crush the bandit group and capture its leaders.

"We are confident that we can get them because people are no longer supportive of the ASG and we have established several dragnets," Sabban said.

As the military operation was taking longer to complete, the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) in the province has offered to help, according to Dolorfino.

"The MNLF signified its intention to help in the operation not because of the reward. They just wanted to clear Sulu of terrorists," Dolorfino said.

But Sabban told the INQUIRER that it was better for the MNLF forces to stay inside their camps.

He said he was not belittling the MNLF's capability but that the military wanted to avoid engaging MNLF combatants in a battle.

"They could be mistaken for Abu Sayyaf bandits," he said.

Sabban also said the military has the capability to run after the terrorists.

"Our troops are equipped with night vision gadgets so they could continue the search even during night time," he said. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Poro Pt. port operations becoming normal

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

DAGUPAN CITY—OPERATIONS AT THE SAN Fernando seaport resumed on Monday after the Philippine Ports Authority took over the management of the seaport at Poro Point in San Fernando City on Monday.

Silverio Mangaoang Jr., PPA port manager, said the PPA removed the barricades at the piers and cargo vessels were allowed to load and unload their cargo.

On Saturday night, the Poro Point Industrial Corp., the seaport operator, barricaded the port area to stop the PPA from taking over their operations.

But Mangaoang said the PPA had started removing the blockades at the port's gates.

"We asked all officials of the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC), the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) and the PPIC to move out of the area so that we can operate smoothly," Mangaoang said in a telephone interview on Monday.

But a businessman, a consignee of a shipment at the San Fernando seaport, told the INQUIRER that only the operations at Pier 2 resumed on Monday as the barricades at Pier 1 have yet to be removed.

Mangaoang said at least 30 policemen and Philippine Coast Guard personnel were in the seaport to help the PPA implement the order of Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza for the PPA to take over the operations of PPIC.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources issued a cease-and-desist order (CDO) to the PPIC after it found out that the company was operating without an environmental compliance certificate (ECC) since it took over the seaport's operations in 1999.

The CDO was signed by Joel Salvador, regional director of the DENR's Environmental Management Bureau.

The PPIC filed for a temporary restraining order at the San Fernando City regional trial court on Monday. The TRO had not been granted as of late yesterday afternoon.

If the TRO will be granted, "we will comply and we will not resist," Mangaoang said.

He said he wrote Rene Venturina, PPIC port manager, informing him about the legal basis of the PPA's takeover of the seaport but the guards at the PPIC office refused to receive it.

In an earlier statement, PPIC lawyer Brigido Dulay said a local court issued an injunction last month preventing the BCDA and PPMC from implementing its takeover resolution.

Dulay said the court ordered the agencies to observe the terms and conditions of the earlier agreements signed between the PPIC and the BCDA.

San Fernando City Mayor Mary Jane Ortega, in a telephone interview on Monday, said a monitoring team had reported the PPIC's violations of environmental laws.

"I wrote the PPIC about the violations several times but I received no reply. Then the Mega MMT found out the company has no ECC so I asked (Environment Secretary Angelo) Reyes about the violations," Ortega said.

She said she was concerned where the cargo vessels dispose of their wastes whenever they dock at the seaport.

"The vessels have people inside them and where do they throw their wastes? Is it at the sea before they dock? Are they making a big sewerage out of the Lingayen Gulf?" she asked.

"We are so concerned about illegal fishing, about waste management and we have a 30-hectare marine sanctuary [at the San Fernando Bay]. Those using the Lingayen Gulf should protect it," she said.

Ortega said the PPIC did not make arrangements with the city government, which operates a sanitary landfill, about proper disposal of the wastes from the sea vessels.

The mayor has called on the PPA to address the environmental concerns that the monitoring team raised against the PPIC.

"It does not matter who operates the seaport. We will still monitor PPA if it is complying with the environmental laws," she said.

In his July 25 order, Salvador said a team from his office monitored the PPIC's facilities after he was informed about the violations uncovered by the monitoring team.

Salvador's office also found out that the PPIC did not have an ECC, which is a requirement for any environmentally critical project.

The ECC granted to the Poro Point Special Economic Freeport Zone, where the PPIC operates, also called for individual locators within the industrial estate to secure a separate ECC from the DENR before implementing any project.

WHAT WENT BEFORE

RUMORS THAT THE BASES CONVERSION DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (BCDA) will take over the Poro Point Seaport in La Union from the Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC) circulated early this year.

The PPIC is 70 percent owned by Bulk Handlers, Inc. (BHI), which won the contract to develop and manage the seaport in 1999. The remaining 30 percent is owned by the BCDA.

BHI is known to pay P50 million to the government annually as part of the deal.

In the beginning of June, the Regional Trial Court in San Fernando issued a temporary restraining order against BCDA and its subsidiary, the Poro Point Management Group (PPMC), to stop them from taking over the seaport.

The TRO was in response to a complaint filed by BHI, that sought court intervention after PPMC passed a resolution declaring the PPIC's 1999 deal with BCDA null and void.

Named in the BHI complaint were BCDA and PPMC chair Filadelfo Singson-Rojas Jr., PPMC president Felix Singson-Racadio, BCDA president Narciso Abaya and PPMC directors Amparo Aspiras, Yves Nisce, Antonio Manguiat, Emma Lim and Carmencita Itchon.

Emma Lim and Carmencita Itchon were employees of Ilocos Sur Gov. Chavit Singson who testified in the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada.

Abaya later denied that the BCDA had any intentions to declare the Poro Point contract null and void, and added that "only the courts could declare such contracts null and void."

Later on June 16, the court issued a preliminary injunction against BCDA and PPMC as the TRO lapsed.

On Aug. 5, a Philippine Ports Authority port manager assigned in Poro Point, Silverio Mangaoang Jr., said he received a memorandum from Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza ordering the PPA to take over the PPIC's cargo handling operations, which prompted PPIC to barricade the port area.

The barricade resulted in the paralysis of port operations.

Abaya said the takeover was the result of PPIC's "serious environment violations" involving the alleged discharge of human and industrial wastes into the waters around the port, adding that Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes had issued a cease-and-desist order on PPIC's operations on Aug. 4.

Abaya also said the PPIC had failed to secure an environmental compliance certificate since it started operations in 1999. *Inquirer Research*

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Kin of OFW who died in Saudi seek help to bring body home

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE FAMILY of an Overseas Filipino Worker who died in Saudi Arabia due to a lingering illness is asking the Department of Foreign Affairs to help bring his body back to his hometown in Guiuan, Eastern Samar.

Marcela Baldegonza said the family wanted to give her cousin Ceasar Baldecañas a decent burial.

"That is all we want—for his dead body be returned here in the country so we can bury him here," she said in a phone interview.

Baldegonza said Baldecañas had been working as a cook in a Chinese restaurant in Saudi Arabia for over 10 years. He was separated from his wife but had a teenage son.

On July 29, he died of cancer at the King Abdulaziz University Hospital in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He was 52.

Baldegonza said she did not know the circumstances surrounding her cousin's death except that he died of cancer.

"We were shocked and saddened by his death. He died in a foreign land alone," she said.

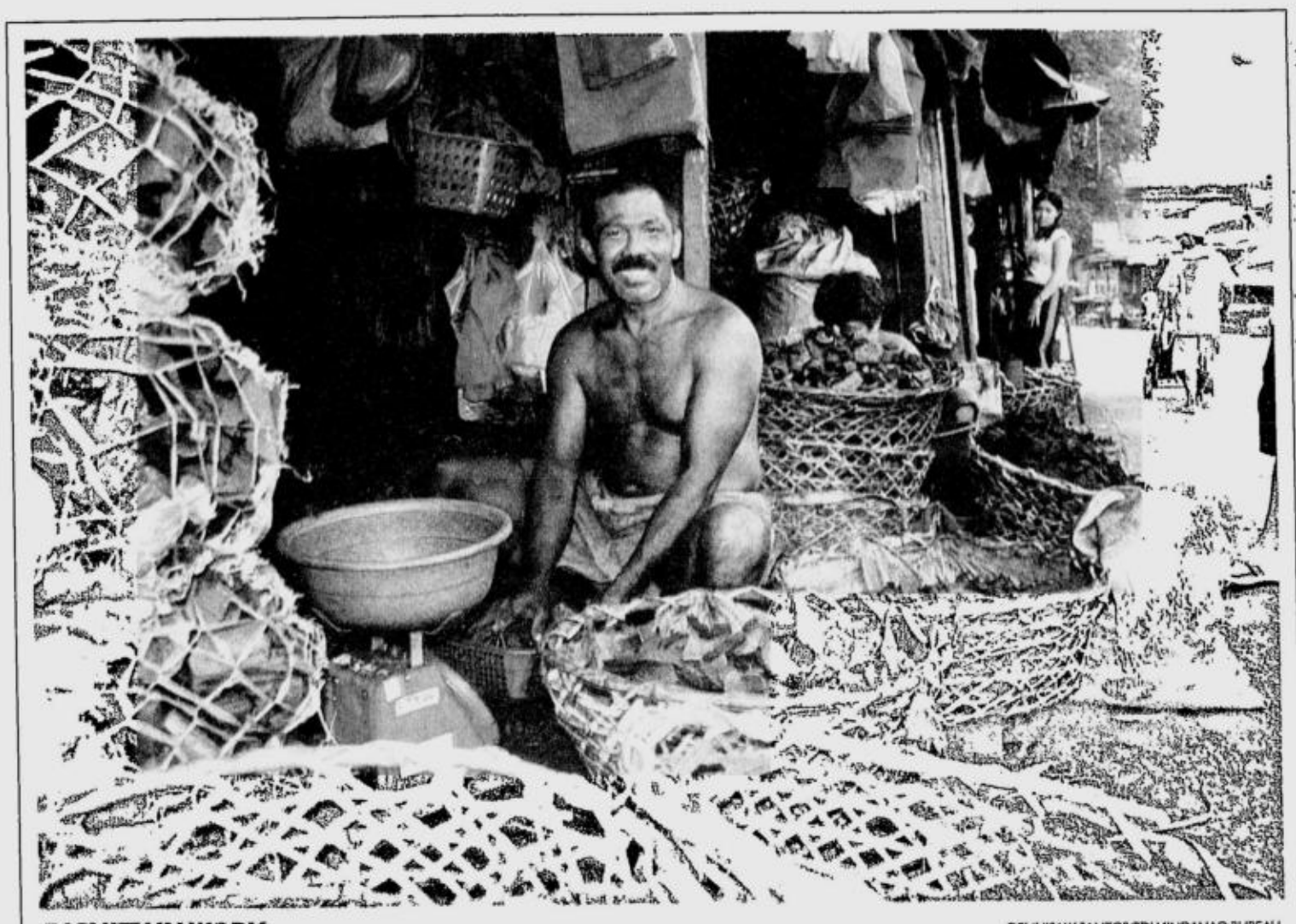
Charlie Cinco, DFA-Eastern Visayas assistant national officer of the consular office, said his office informed the family of Baldecañas of his death.

"We asked them (the family) that they execute a special power of attorney (SPA) so that we can begin the process of repatriating the remains of Baldecañas. Also, the SPA will give our office the right to conduct an investigation surrounding his death," Cinco said.

The DFA official did not know where the remains of Baldecañas were being kept.

The communication received by his office only showed that Baldecañas died of cancer at the hospital in Jeddah on July 29.

The family would also receive financial assistance from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.



DIGNITY IN WORK
DENNIS IAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU
A smiling Ricardo Rofuli, 50, doesn't mind getting soiled and blackened by charcoal he is repacking to sell at the Bankerohan Market in Davao City, as long as it helps him feed his family and send four children to school.

10,000 soldiers sent to battle against Reds

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CAMP OLIVAS, PAMPANGA—ALL 10,000 troops of the military's Northern Luzon Command (Nolcom) have been deployed to rebel fronts since last week, with half of them spread in areas in Central Luzon where communist rebels have mass bases, logistics and financial support, the Nolcom chief said.

"All troops are on the fronts," Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos said in a phone interview on Monday.

He said soldiers from the 24th, 48th, 56th, 69th, 70th and 71st infantry battalions, as well as from the 3rd Infantry Brigade that were pulled out from Mindanao in June, had been concentrated in the "priority provinces" of Bulacan, Bataan, Zambales, Pampanga and Nueva Ecija.

PALPARAN

The priority areas in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley and Cordillera are still being reviewed by officials of the 5th Infantry Division based in Isabela, Ramos said.

More men

"All division commanders have standing orders to increase the fill up of line units. In short, push more men to the fronts," he said in an earlier text message.

"Line units" refer to battalions and their companies.

In previous reports, Nolcom said the New People's Army has maintained a total of 21 operational units in the four regions, eight of them in Central Luzon alone.

Ramos declined to cite details on the towns and cities that were backed up with more soldiers.

The full deployment happened almost two weeks since Armed Forces Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon ordered on July 25 the sending of more forces to the frontlines in order to meet the two-year deadline to crush the insurgency set by President Macapagal-Arroyo in June and the planned super regions that she announced in her State of the Nation Address last month.

Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division based in Central Luzon, said he would add more troops in four to five towns in the region. He declined to give details.

Palparan stepped up the counterinsurgency campaign two weeks before Ms Arroyo ordered an intensified drive against the rebels.

Palparan idea

Early in the campaign, he said he assigned 500 soldiers to 57 towns and cities in Pampanga and Bulacan. Reports reaching the INQUIRER said the military had set up detachments in about 100 villages in those two provinces, as well as Nueva Ecija and Tarlac.

Palparan declined to disclose the number of troops and detachments in the region's lowlands.

Asked about his instructions concerning respect for human rights, Ramos said that was "not an option but a must for soldiers."

"We are upholding human rights. That's what we are protecting," he said.

Civil libertarians have raised concern for the safety of civilians and political activists.

Since 2005, at least 82 activists have been killed while more than 40 have been missing in Central Luzon. These incidents have been blamed on soldiers under Palparan.

Palparan has denied allegations of leftist groups that he masterminded the extrajudicial executions and is maintaining death squads.

Ramos has vowed to "employ all available resources to crush the Communist Party of the Philippines, the National Democratic Front, and the NPA."

Digos cops bare plot to kill commentator

By Eldie S. Aguirre
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIGOS CITY—POLICE SAID THEY have uncovered a plot to kill another broadcaster here.

Chief Insp. Cesar Cabuhat, city police chief, said he had received reliable information that Orlando "Dondon" Dinoy could be the next target after Armando Pace.

Pace, 53, was gunned down on July 18, 15 minutes after he signed off the air.

The alleged gunman in Pace's killing, Joy Anticamara, was arrested but the motive remains unclear.

Like Pace, Dinoy is a commentator of Radio Ukay Digos.

Cabuhat did not specify how the police got hold of the information about the plot against Dinoy, but he said steps had already been taken to provide him security.

"The first step we did was to provide police protection to Dondon so that he'll be safe from possible attack," Cabuhat said.

He said police escorts would also serve as deterrent to those planning to assassinate Dinoy.

Mayor Arsenio Latasa said Dinoy "should lie low" until police got to the bottom of the assassination plot.

Dinoy told the INQUIRER that he could not say whether the plot was prompted by his commentaries on perceived wrongdoings by government officials or the TV interviews he gave on Pace's death.

"I don't know why I became a target. I could not remember criticizing anybody beyond the (journalist) code of ethics during my program. All I can recall was my strong condemnation against the killer of Racman (Pace) and the mastermind of that ruthless killing," he said.

Local journalists urged police authorities to ensure their safety.

"We could not afford to lose another journalist in this province. If this thing would happen, again, who would speak for the people against erring government officials? I am strongly condemning this flagrant curtailment of the freedom of the press and of expression within a country we consider to be under a democratic rule," Marland Malnegro, a local broadcaster, said.

₱600M needed to build UP campus inside Clark

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC Zone—The University of the Philippines will need P600 million to build a "university town" that will serve as the "intellectual capital" of Clark, Subic and Central Luzon, an official said.

Dr. Juliet Mallari, UP Pampanga (formerly UP San Fernando Extension Program) director, said the fund-raising had begun following the approval by the state-owned Clark Development Corp. of a 3.28-hectare lot as permanent site for a UP campus here.

A satellite campus is also planned at Clark's Sacobia subzone, Mallari said, citing recent discussions with the CDC board.

She said pledges were beginning to come from alumni and friends of UP. On top of the budget from the UP central administration, the university was tapping support from local governments and private corporations.

UP President Emerlinda Roman and UP Diliman Chancellor Sergio Cao are leading a stakeholders' conference in December, Mallari said.

She said the concept of a university town has been defined in the comprehensive conversion program of the Legislative-Executive Bases Council led by former UP President Jose Abueva.

Mt. Pinatubo's lahar flows in 1995 displaced the then UPSF from the old Pampanga High School Compound, prompting the transfer first to the Bren Guiao Sports Complex in 1996. It then transferred to two dilapidated Philippine Air Force buildings in Clark in 1997 and finally to a warehouse also in Clark in 1998.

It took this academic community almost 10 years to get a site of its own although Presidential Proclamation 163 by former President Fidel Ramos had approved the relocation.

Within that decade, the university town concept proved to be successful in special economic zones in Aqaba, Jordan, in Visakhatnam, India, and in Xiamen, Guangdong and Shenzhen in China, Mallari said.

"The concept of the university town can, therefore, be an enabler of CDC's vision [for Clark] to be the most competitive international service and logistics center in Southeast Asia," she said.

She said UP has been the source of brain power by the CDC. At least 50 percent of managers at the CDC are UP graduates. Many students enrolled at the UP Pampanga's master of management course occupy top positions in Clark-based companies. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

SC junks bid for early ruling in Legazpi poll case

LEGAZPI CITY—THE SUpreme Court has turned down and labeled "premature" the "motion for early resolution" filed by Mayor Noel Rosal's rival, Michael Imperial, seeking to lift the temporary restraining order on the Commission on Elections' declaration of Imperial as winner in the 2004 mayoral election after a post-election protest.

The motion, filed on June 30, was turned down in a resolution of the high court issued *en banc* on July 11.

In its May 29 ruling, the Comelec *en banc* affirmed the decision of its second division that Imperial was the duly elected mayor with 33,861 votes over Rosal who had 31,673 votes.

During the May 2004 elections, the city board of canvassers declared Rosal winner with 44,277 votes against Imperial's 33,275.

Rosal's 14,067 votes were invalidated by the Comelec's Second Division, composed of Commissioner Florentino Tuazon and then Commissioner Meloh Sadain, whose term of office expired in early February.

The Comelec affirmed the division's ruling on May 29 even as Rosal had a pending petition for certiorari with the Supreme Court.

Rosal has filed a motion for a TRO with the high court. *Ephraim Aguilar, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Mining firm says it hasn't started digging

NARRA town Mayor Lucena Dimaala (wearing sunglasses) inspects the siltation pond of the mining concession area of Platinum Group Metals Corp. in her town. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—MacroAsia Mining Co. has denied it has started operations even without an environmental compliance certificate in its more than 1,000 hectares of concession in Brooke's Point, Palawan, as alleged by antimining groups.

Lawyer Marivic Moya, MacroAsia spokesperson, told the provincial council, that questioned the firm's Mineral Production Sharing Agreement (MPSA), it had not brought a single shovel to the site as it did not know yet what to extract from the operations.

Despite this, the company has granted scholarships to students from indigenous communities in five barangays in the area. It was about to begin a medical program but decided to suspend it because of the charges raised, she added.

Another mining project, in Narra town, got positive reception from local officials.

The town's mayor, Lucena Dimaala, in a statement said the mining project of Platinum Group Metals Corp. (PGMC) was able to provide job opportunities in the past two years and helped lower the unemployment rate in Narra and its nearby barangays.

She said 75 percent of the residents of Narra alone were gainfully employed at PGMC.

"The firm did its best to help the local government unit address the unemployment problem here," she said in the statement.

She said PGMC is also committed to provide scholarship grants to poor but deserving students in the high school and collegiate levels.

She said indigenous peoples from Narra received 1 percent of their share of P2,384,500 derived from the nickel mining operation last year, while PGMC is set to turn over another P2.1 million this year.

The provincial government earlier expressed surprise at the Department of Environment and Natural Resources' grant to MacroAsia of an MPSA for large-scale mining in about 1,130 hectares of land in Brooke's Point.

Gov. Joel Reyes sent a letter to Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes on May 10 seeking the suspension or cancellation of MacroAsia's MPSA because it had failed to comply with the province's standard process for mining applications.

Reyes said MacroAsia bypassed the provincial government when it obtained its MPSA as all he could remember was the company's application for an exploration permit. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Capiz townsfolk defend former agriculture exec

By Felipe V. Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

ROXAS CITY—FORMER AGRICULTURE UNdersecretary Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante may be a villain to many people, but to his brother and his former classmates at a seminary school here, he is a man of integrity.

One of those who strongly vouched for Bolante's character was his high school classmate, Msgr. Alden Bolivar, parish priest of St. Isidore Church in Pontevedra, Capiz.

"He was always friendly to everybody and shared whatever he had," Bolivar said of his classmate at the Saint Pius X Seminary here.

He said he knew Bolante as an "honest, good, prayerful and happy person."

Bolante has been detained since July 7 in the United States for entering the country with a cancelled B1/B2 visa.

He had ignored a summons from the Senate agriculture committee that had looked into the disbursement of the P728-million fertilizer fund.

Bolante allegedly disbursed the fund to administration allies to bolster President Macapagal-Arroyo's candidacy in the 2004 presidential election.

Eleazar Almalbis, one of Bolante's former high school friends, said he did not believe his friend was involved in any fraudulent activities.

Too nice

Bolante was "too nice" to be engaged in any shady deals, according to Almalbis.

"Joc-joc has plenty of money and no reason to put his good image and reputation in a bad light because of the fertilizer issue. Joc-joc's name is being dragged into the issue to discredit the President," he said.

Almalbis, now the barangay chair of Culasi, Roxas City, and Bolante were schoolmates at the Saint Pius X Seminary from 1964 to 1968.

He said Bolante had no interest in politics. In fact, he said, Bolante refused to run for public office when he encouraged him to.

But Bolante, according to Almalbis, was civic-minded and was always ready to help those in need.

Almalbis said it was Bolante and their fellow alumnus, lawyer Ceferino Patiño, who organized the Pian Alumni Association.

Vicente Bolante Jr., Joc-joc's elder brother, said his sibling had never been involved in any wrongdoing since they were children.

Vicente, who lives in the Bolante ancestral house in Poblacion in Dao town, lamented that his brother had been unfairly pictured as a villain in media reports.

Concern for the poor

Mayors Ernesto Escutin of Dao and Heracleo Benjamin of Dumarao also had good things to say about Bolante.

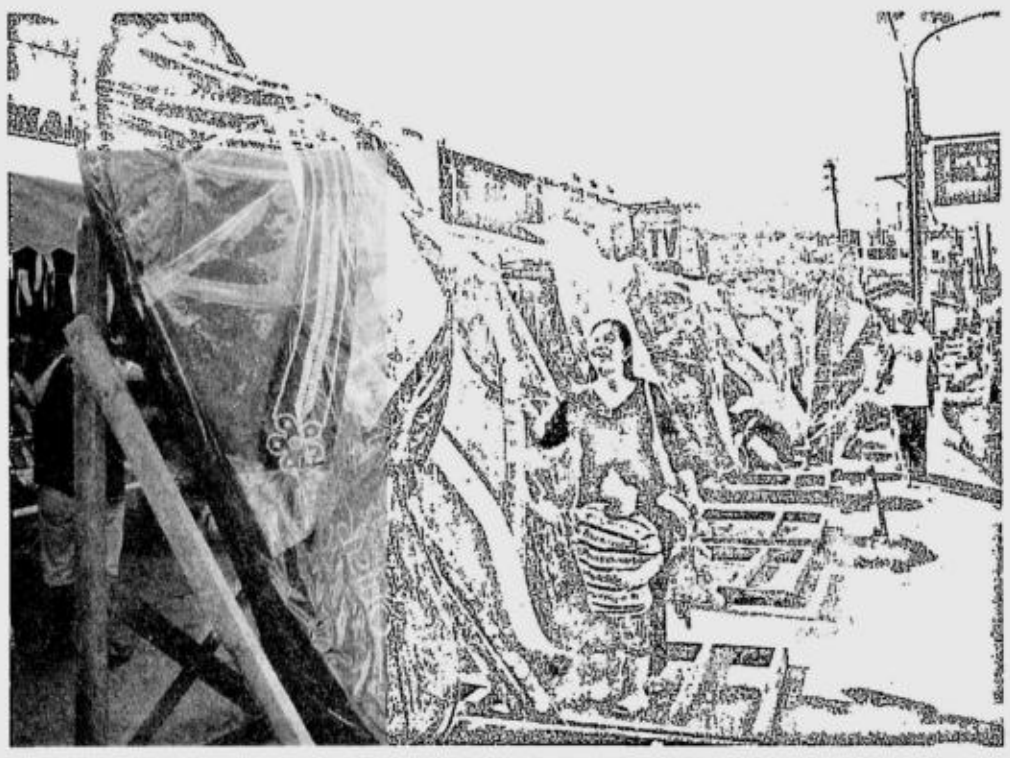
Benjamin said his town was a recipient of projects facilitated by Bolante, among them a P3-million farm-to-market road, farm machines and implements.

Escutin said Bolante was instrumental in realizing the Poblacion-Duyoc President's Bridge and the 11-km concreting of the Ilas Norte-Maayon boundary provincial road.

Both mayors acknowledged that they were recipients of the fertilizer fund, but they insisted that there was nothing irregular about this.

Born to a middle-class family on Aug. 28, 1951, Joc-joc is the youngest of the four children of farmer-businessman Vicente Sr. and schoolteacher Salvacion Isada, now both deceased, of Dao.

Joc-joc spent his elementary years at the Dao Central School, his high school at the Saint Pius X Seminary, and college at the University of San Agustin in Iloilo City from which he graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Commerce degree.



GIANT SLIPPERS. A woman and her grandson admire pairs of giant slippers on display in Gapan, Nueva Ecija, as a highlight of the city's three-week "Tsinelas Festival."

ANSELMO ROQUE/PDI CENTRAL LUZON DESK

Gapan puts heart, sole into Festival of Slippers

From page A1

At least 50 pairs of giant slippers, with the biggest pair stretching 12 feet, were put on display on Monday at the launch of a three-week "Tsinelas Festival" here.

The display in the city's business center along the national highway is meant to bolster Gapan's claim as the "Slippers Capital" of the Philippines, Mayor Nestor Natividad said.

One of the festival highlights is a trade exhibit participated in by local slipper manufacturers.

Before the war

Gapan, which became a city five years ago, has a long history of slipper-making.

Natividad said that before World War II, several Gapan families were engaged in the production of leather slippers that were sold in various parts of the country.

Business slackened when other kinds of slippers, including those made of rubber, appeared in the market.

In recent years, Natividad said, families began the backyard production of slippers made of synthetic leather with rubber soles.

Thriving industry

Now, slipper-making is multimillion-peso industry, he said.

Gapan-made slippers have found a steady market in shopping malls and department stores, according to Marcelo Linsangan, chair of the City of Gapan Footwear Multipurpose Cooperative.

Mansion ...

From page A1

dence relating to asylum requests by Filipinos claiming persecution by the NPA.

"The first ground is that you should be living in an NPA-infested area, and the second ground is that you must show that you cannot relocate anywhere else in the Philippines," Roque said.

He said that if someone failed to meet these criteria, he or she would not be eligible for asylum.

"And this would be especially true for Joc-joc, whose house is in Ayala-Alabang. There is absolutely no NPA threat there," said Roque, whose family also owns a house in the upscale subdivision.

He said his group would take pictures of Bolante's home and submit these to the Chicago immigration court.

Bodyguards

To further bolster their bid to foil Bolante's asylum request, Roque said he and his associates were getting sworn statements from members of the Fil-Am community in Chicago who supposedly saw Bolante two months ago with bodyguards while he was residing in Evanston, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago.

"We were told that he traveled with three to six bodyguards, and they would travel in a convoy," Roque said.

"They were living like royalty there. The Rotary is based in the city and his wife and children are also there," he said.

Bolante is a director of Rotary International.

Roque said his group would inform the Chicago court about Bolante's security detail to show that the former agriculture undersecretary would not feel safe even if he were allowed to stay in the United States.

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Police raid fails to nab 'Gringo' in Masbate ranch

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE SWOOPED DOWN ON A RANCH IN the Bicol region yesterday morning but, as in previous raids, they failed to get their man—ex-Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan.

The raid on the estate on Ticao Island in Masbate was the latest in a series of similar operations to capture Honasan—wanted for allegedly masterminding the failed Oakwood mutiny of July 27, 2003—both in Luzon and the Visayas in the last two months.

CIDG chief Director Jesus Verzosa said the ranch was owned by a "known supporter" of Honasan whom he did not identify.

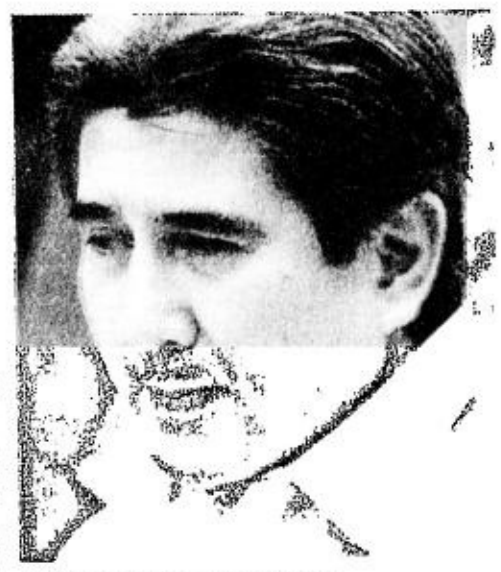
"We have been in constant monitor of his movements and we received information that the ex-senator was sighted (at the) hacienda," said Senior Supt. Benito Estipona, head of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group in Bicol.

The police did not leave Hacienda Batuan empty-handed, however. They arrested three caretakers—identified as Menardo Asis, Rodrigo Grutas and Roberto Santua—and seized several firearms.

The weapons included an M-16 Armalite rifle with telescope, a 22-cal. rifle with telescope, two 38-cal. and one 22-cal. revolvers, a rifle grenade and a silencer, the CIDG said.

In June, suspected communist rebels in military uniform killed two workers in an attack on another farm in Masbate reportedly owned by Honasan, a former Army colonel who played a prominent role in the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos but who turned against his successor, Corazon Aquino.

In the '80s, he led several bloody coup attempts against the Aquino administration.



HONASAN: "Good" in hiding

Also last June, police raided a farm in Iloilo province where Honasan, who carries a P5-million bounty on his head, was reportedly sighted.

Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, a CIDG officer based in Metro Manila, had described Honasan as "good" in hiding.

"He has access to fast sea and air craft," De los Santos said.

Philippine National Police Director General Oscar Calderon assured the public the police would not give up the search for Honasan, given all the other things they had to do.

"There is a specific unit tasked to perform these operations, in the same manner that in the investigation of the killings [of activists] we have Task Force Usig," he said.

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CA stops arrest of LTFRB chief

By DJ Yap

THE COURT OF APPEALS HAS ISSUED A temporary restraining order to prevent a Quezon City court from enforcing its arrest warrant against Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board chair Maria Elena Bautista.

The Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 96 has cited Bautista for indirect contempt and ordered her arrest for failure to comply with its directive for the transfer of a bus liner franchise.

In a seven-page resolution, CA Associate Justice Jose Reyes Jr. granted Bautista's petition for a 60-day TRO and gave the respondents, including Judge Afable Cajigal, 10 days to file their comments. The CA said the lower court's July 26 resolution violated her right to due process because she was not allowed to answer the charges in a hearing.

Unlike in direct contempt cases, a person can only be held liable for indirect contempt if there was a "charge in writing, an opportunity to comment on the charge and an opportunity to be heard," the court said.

Cajigal issued the arrest warrant last month, finding Bautista's explanation for her noncompliance "insufficient."

The case stemmed from a damage suit involving Inland Trailways and the families of people who died or were seriously hurt during an accident in Casiguran, Sorsogon in March 1991.

Cajigal awarded almost P1.5 million to the victims or their heirs, but the only property of Inland Trailways the court could secure as payment was its franchise. In May 2004, the sheriff auctioned off the franchise. Roberto Nicol, owner of Dondon Liner, paid P750,000 for the franchise, with the proceeds going to the victims and heirs.

In her motion for reconsideration, Bautista said she alone could not authorize the transfer from Inland Trailways to Dondon Liner. She said it was the LTFRB that could do so after a thorough deliberation.

She also questioned the authority of the QC RTC branch to interfere with the duties and functions of the LTFRB.

Motive behind lensman's slay could be financial, say police

Witness points to plumber as gunman

By Luige A. del Puerto

A DISPUTE OVER THE COLLECTION OF association fees and illegal electrical and water connections may have been the motive behind the murder of a photojournalist in Malabon City two Mondays ago.

Police claimed yesterday they had "solved" the killing of Prudencio Melendres with the arrest of Roberto Lopez, a 36-year-old plumber, on Friday.

The alleged gunman was identified by a witness who claimed he was only three meters away when the shooting took place in Barangay Tonsuya.

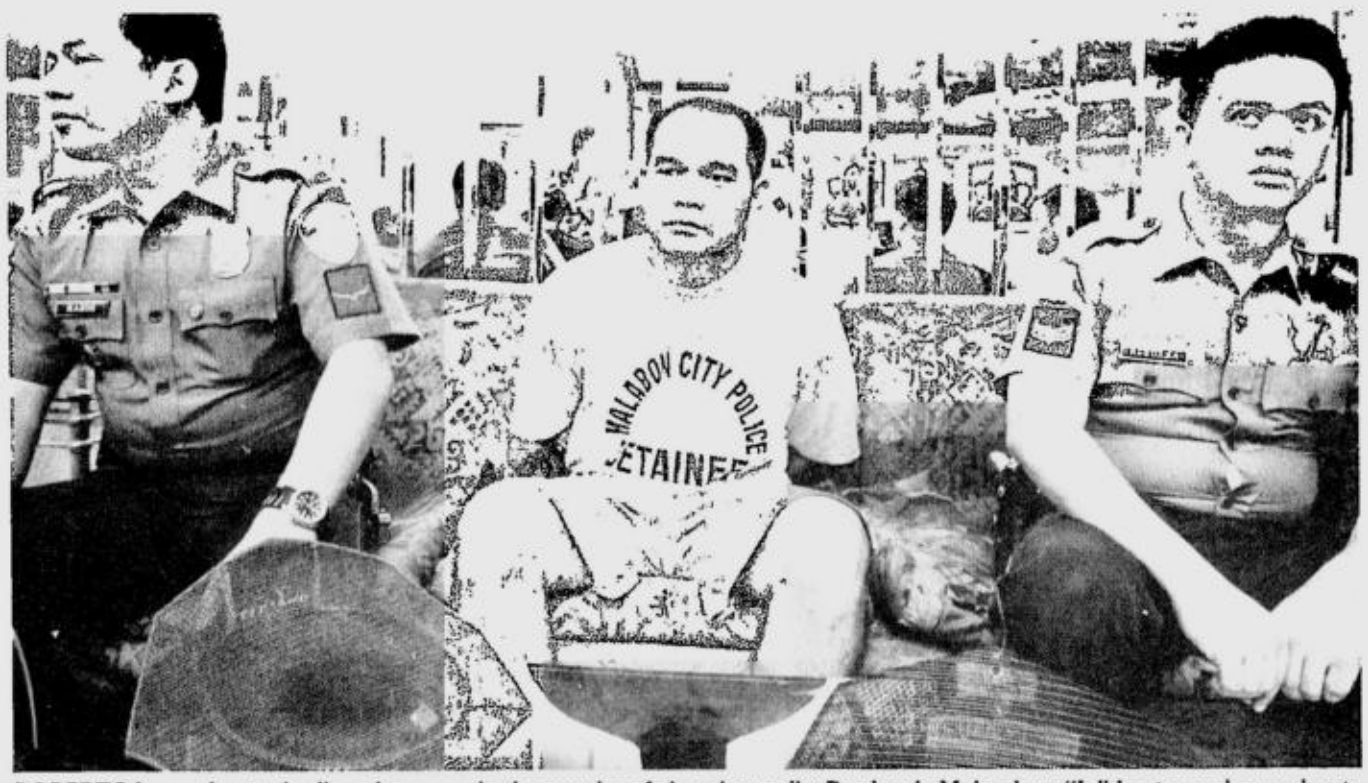
Lopez denied the claim of the witness, a *pedicab* driver. "I did not even know about the killing," Lopez told the INQUIRER shortly after he was presented to the media.

Senior police officials were quick to give themselves a pat on the back for doing "20 percent" of the task President Arroyo ordered them to complete in 10 weeks. Ms Arroyo ordered the police to solve at least 10 cases of extra-judicial killings during the specified time.

International press watchdog groups have criticized the President for failing to give adequate protection to journalists, as well as leftist dissidents.

At least four journalists have been murdered this year, after seven were killed in 2005, making the Philippines the second most dangerous place for journalists next to Iraq.

Leftist groups, meanwhile, said 104 of their members had been killed by what they believe are Army "death squads," since Ms Arroyo assumed office in 2001.



ROBERTO Lopez (center), alleged gunman in the murder of photojournalist Prudencio Melendres: "I did not even know about the killing." JOAN BONDOC

The claim is denied by the military, which accuses many leftist groups of being fronts for communist rebels.

"The murder of (Melendres) is the second high-profile murder we were able to solve within the 10-week timetable given by the President," Philippine National Police chief Director General Oscar Calderon said.

Last week, police arrested two of their own, Inspector Bryan Limbo and PO3 Aristotle de Guzman, and a certain Nani Magnaye in connection with the killing of RPN 9 cameraman Ralph Ruñez.

Northern Police District director Chief Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said dispute over the control of a homeowners' association appeared to be the motive behind Melendres' murder.

"Melendres was the leader of Phase 3 (of the association). He had been implementing a campaign against illegal electric and water connections that could have displeased some people in the association," Bataoil said.

Investigators said the association also had a large amount at its disposal. Members paid P100 a month in fees and the leaders had broad powers over the affairs of residents.

Another group collected up to P500 per week for illegal electric connection, and up to P100 for illegal water connection, investigators said.

The suspect is a cousin of Antonio Lopez, one of two people mentioned by Melendres in a sealed letter he asked his wife to open if something happened to him.

Police are now looking for a "Chief Marco," the other name mentioned in the letter.

Police questioned Antonio Lopez but released him for lack of evidence. He and Melendres allegedly argued over illegal electric connections, which the latter wanted stopped, investigators said.

Calderon said a key to the resolution of the case was the cooperation of the community.

He hinted that their efforts to solve extra-judicial killings were being hampered by a lack of trust in the police by militant groups which had dismissed the investigations as insincere efforts.

The PNP chief said communities in Metro Manila seemed more aware of their obligations and duties as concerned citizens in giving vital information.

In the case of (killings of) militants that often happened in remote areas, Calderon said the victims' families were hesitant to coordinate with investigators.

Militants have accused government of having a hand in the continuing series of political assassinations in the country.

Two suspected abortionists arrested

By Margaux C. Ortiz

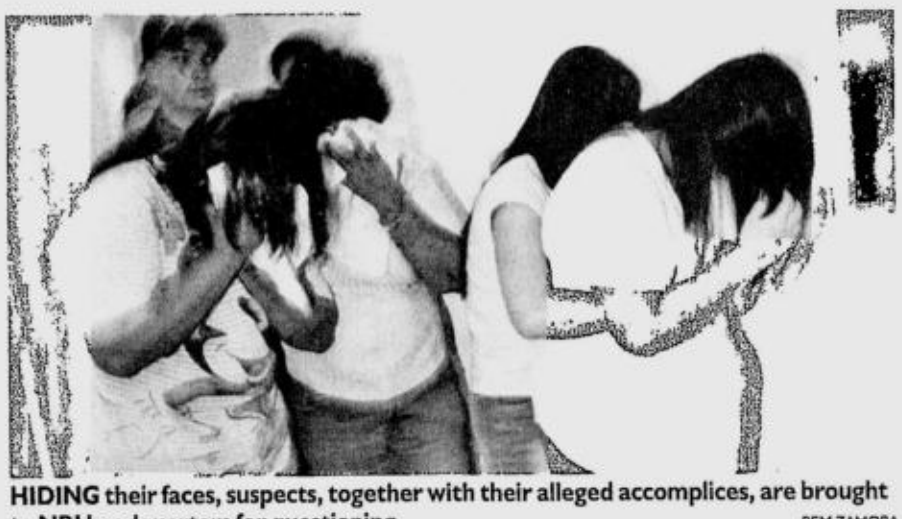
TWO SUSPECTED ABORTIONISTS WERE arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) during an entrapment operation in Malabon City last week.

Acting NBI Director Nestor Mantaring identified the suspects as Josie Jordan, 28, of No. 101 Acero St., Tugatog; and Herminia Sales, 40, of No. 165 Interior Kaingin.

Herbal medicine vendor Elvira del Rosario, 54, of No. 612 Peñalosa, Tondo, Manila; and Sales' assistant, Anna Basco, 29, of No. 127 Basilio St., Acacia, Malabon City, were also arrested.

An investigation conducted by the NBI National Capital Region (NCR) Office headed by Regional Director Ruel Lasala showed that complainant Ana (not her real name), two months pregnant, met with Del Rosario July 17 to ask about having an abortion.

NBI NCR executive officer Rommel Vallejo told reporters yesterday that Del Rosario served as bridge between the prospective client and the alleged abortionists. Del Rosario brought Ana to the house of Naty Santos, where Jordan maintained a clinic in one of the rooms.



HIDING their faces, suspects, together with their alleged accomplices, are brought to NBI headquarters for questioning. REM ZAMORA

The suspects told Ana that the abortion would cost P3,500, but Ana had changed her mind even before the procedure could start. "I realized that there were other solutions to my problem," Ana told reporters.

The complainant then sought the NBI's assistance after the incident. With the bureau's help, Ana was able to contact Del Rosario who brought her back to Jordan's place.

Pretending she had a heart problem and could not go through the procedure, Del Rosario reportedly recommended a "more efficient" abortionist nearby. The complainant proceeded to the clinic owned by Amparo Dionisio, where Sales allegedly conducted her illegal operations.

Sales reportedly asked for P8,000 as payment. Ana, saying she did not have the money, left, and called the NBI.

The suspects now face charges of attempted abortion in the Malabon City Prosecutor's Office.

METROBRIEFS

Ambushed in Caloocan

THE HEAD of an association of Indian nationals in Metro Manila survived an assassination attempt early Sunday evening in Caloocan City, but another Indian who was with him during the ambush was killed. Chief Insp. Jose Valencia identified the victims as Bhagwant Rai Bansai, 48, president of Khalsa Diwan Indian Sikh Temple and Rajesh Kumar, 48, of Valenzuela City. The two were on their way to Bansai's condominium at around 6:30 p.m. when at least 12 men fired at their Honda CRV as it turned towards Susano St., 6th Avenue, Grace Park. Bansai, who was driving, was hit on the right side of his body. Kumar managed to jump out of the vehicle, but he was killed by the suspects who caught up with him and shot him at close range. Police said the motive for the ambush has yet to be determined. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Just helping, says Manny

BOXING idol Manny Pacquiao merely offered to help Manila Mayor Lito Atienza carry out his development projects out of gratitude for the support given to him by the city government in his boxing career. Atienza issued the statement amid talks about Pacquiao's possible move from the boxing ring to the political arena. The mayor also denied that he had already endorsed Pacquiao as the running mate of his son Arnold "Ali" Atienza, presidential assistant on youth and sports and chair of the Manila Sports Council. Fanning the reports about Pacquiao's alleged political plans was his filing of transfer of registration records from General Santos City in Cotabato to the sixth district of Manila where the boxing champ owns a condominium unit. "Manny had himself registered as a voter and resident of Manila simply because he wanted to vote here. He said he wanted to help in our programs," Atienza quoted Pacquiao as saying. *Tina G. Santos*

Escolta as IT center

FROM being a premier financial and business district in Binondo during the postwar era, the Manila City government is hoping to transform the downtown Escolta area into a world-class Information and Technology (IT) Center. Manila Mayor Lito Atienza recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Federation of Filipino-Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. and the Escolta Commercial Association Inc. to develop Calle Escolta as an "ultra-modern" IT center. The Escolta Waterfront Development, where food, beverage stalls and al fresco cafes will be put up to provide entertainment and relaxation to guests, will complement activities at the center, Atienza said. *Margaux C. Ortiz*

DID YOU KNOW

RIZAL Park was originally called Bagumbayan (new town) by the Spaniards. They later changed the name to Luneta to denote a detached, crescent-shaped fort. The area was later known as Rizal Park after the unveiling of a monument honoring Dr. Jose Rizal on Dec. 30, 1913, the 17th death anniversary of the national hero.

Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research

Roldan lawyers drop out from kidnap case

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THEY GOT THEIR CLIENT THE TEMPORARY freedom he wanted. But only four days after former congressman and actor Dennis Roldan walked out of jail after posting bail, his lawyers decided to withdraw from the case.

Roldan, whose real name is Mitchell Gumabao, is accused of masterminding the kidnapping of a 3-year-old Filipino-Chinese boy in February 2005.

Kidnapping is a nonbailable offense. But in her decision granting Roldan bail, Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 261 Judge Agnes Reyes-Carpio said evidences presented so far against Roldan were weak. The decision angered the victim's family and several anticrime groups. The victim's father, Roger Yu, had requested the prosecution to file not only a motion for reconsideration but also a petition asking Carpio to inhibit herself from the case.

Six days after Carpio's decision was announced in open court, defense lawyer Sigfrid Fortun and his fellow defense lawyer from the Fortun, Narvasa and Salazar Law Firm told the court they were withdrawing from the controversial case.

"The undersigned counsel respectfully withdraws its appearance as counsel for the accused Mitchell Y. Gumabao whose conformity is indicated below," the letter from the law firm dated July 31 said. Roldan had affixed his signature in the two-page letter. Fortun and lawyer Karl Arian Castillo also affixed their signatures in the letter.

The letter did not explain why the lawyers were withdrawing from the case.

According to a source from Roldan's camp familiar with the case, the decision was "mutual." But the source declined to elaborate.

Yu had earlier dared Roldan to attend the next hearings if he really believed he was innocent. Several anticrime groups, apart from Yu, expressed apprehensions that Roldan would flee the country after he was granted bail.

Roldan's five co-accused are currently detained after Carpio junked all their bail applications. But his alleged girlfriend and fellow mastermind Suzette Wang remains at large and is believed to have fled the country.

In their interviews after the decision was handed down, Fortun and Castillo said fears that Roldan would escape were unfounded.

"He does not have a reason to flee, especially now that the evidences presented against him during the bail hearings were weak," Castillo had told the INQUIRER the day Roldan walked out of the Pasig City Jail.

Fortun has defended prominent personalities in high-profile cases. He stood as a lawyer for jailed former President Joseph Estrada during the aborted impeachment trial more than five years ago. He also stood as counsel for actress Kris Aquino and Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

Experts take stock after first quarter-century of war on AIDS

PARIS—THE BIGGEST-EVER council of war on AIDS opens next Sunday, a quarter-century after the disease, surfacing among American gays, took its first step in a global rampage that has now claimed more than 25 million lives.

But in contrast to previous meetings where anguish, frustration and protest were often the hallmark, the six-day 16th International AIDS Conference, running in the Canadian city of Toronto, should unfold in a mood of relative optimism and serenity.

For the first time in its dreadful history, acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) appears to be marking time.

At the end of last year, 38.6 million people were living with the human immunodeficiency virus, the agency UNAIDS reported in May.

The global proportion of people infected with HIV "is believed to have peaked in the late 1990s and to have stabilized subsequently," it declared.

At the same time, the rollout of cheaper, lifesaving antiretrovirals to poor countries is pushing ahead.

And the risks of which pharmaceutical giants so vociferously warned just five years ago—mismanagement, corruption, failure to follow a complex drug regimen—have so far not materialized.

In December 2003, only 400,000 people out of 6.5 million badly infected people in the developing world had access to these drugs. Two years later, the tally was 1.3 million and has surged further since then.

These encouraging events were born of tough experience and campaigning to create a political dynamism about AIDS. In turn, the politicians opened the financial spigots, leading to the more successful prevention, treatment and awareness campaigns that we see today.

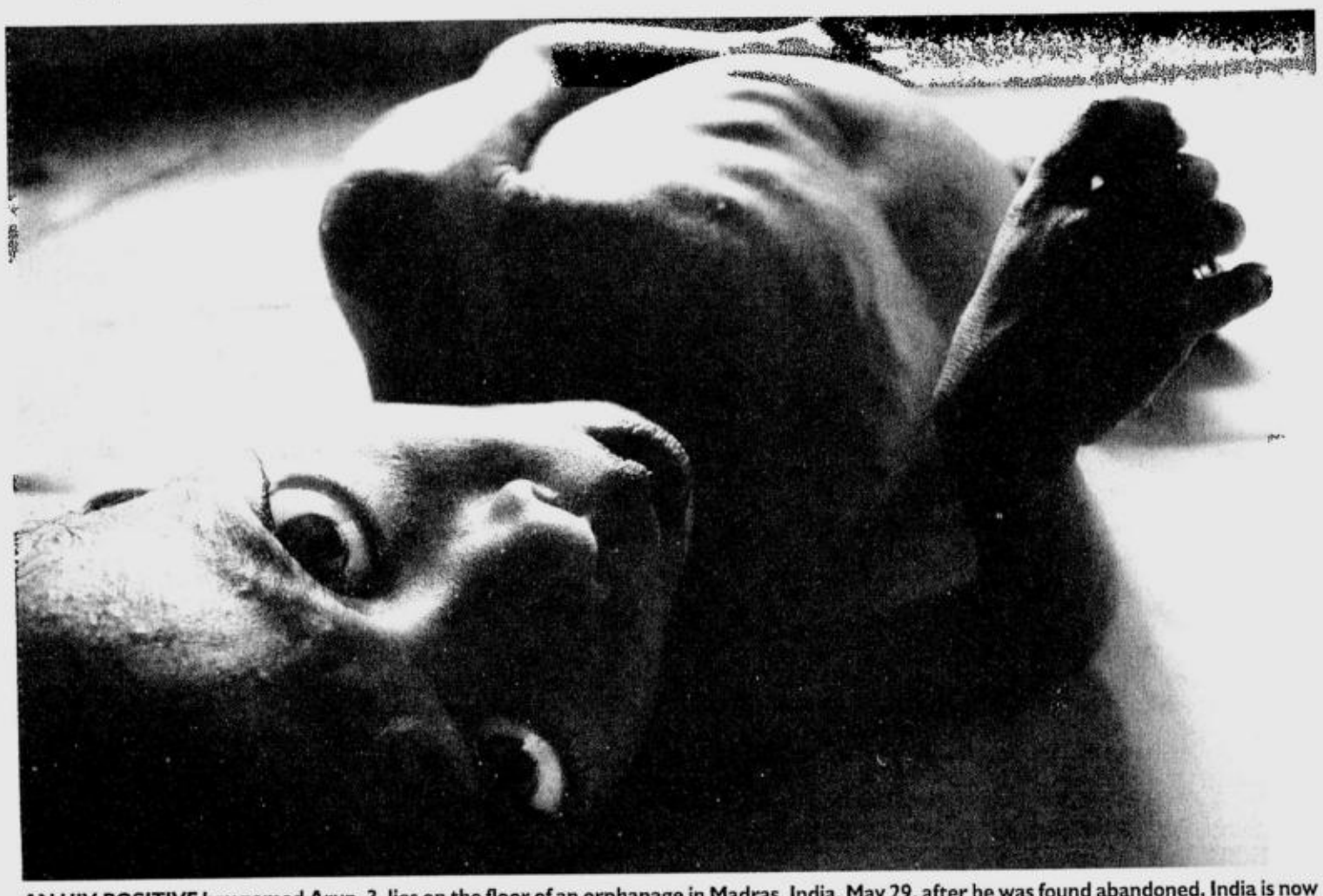
"We have reached a plateau in the history of the AIDS epidemic," said Achmat Dangor, UNAIDS' director of advocacy. "It's because over the last 25 years, we've learnt some bitter lessons about what to do and what not to do."

Dangor said the optimism had to be heavily salted with caution, noting that AIDS still claimed 2.8 million lives last year and 4.1 million people became newly infected.

"It's true to say that the epidemic is slowing down globally, but we also need to be aware that in certain regions and countries it continues to expand," warned Dangor.

The search for a cure and vaccine for HIV remains beyond the horizon.

"HIV is unusually well-equipped to elude immune defenses, as exemplified by its ability to vary extensively, to persist in viral reservoirs and to eventually overcome the immune system," Anthony Fauci, director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), said in a co-authored warning marking the 25th anniversary of the first detection of AIDS. *AFP*



AN HIV-POSITIVE boy named Arun, 3, lies on the floor of an orphanage in Madras, India, May 29, after he was found abandoned. India is now home to the world's largest number of people living with HIV/AIDS, with an estimated 5.7 million infections. AP

Coping replaces despair in San Francisco

SAN FRANCISCO—TWENTY-FIVE years ago a mysterious disease that came to be known as AIDS cut a deadly swathe through San Francisco.

Care-free sex in bathhouses yielded inexorably to terror as hospitals and graveyards filled with friends and lovers of gays and bisexuals left with grief, fear and the stigma of "the gay plague."

"It was insane," said Richard Broussard, a 44-year-old San Francisco man diagnosed as HIV-positive two decades ago. "You'd go to a funeral and everyone was freaked out."

People showing AIDS symptoms were kicked off commercial airplanes and some funeral homes wouldn't handle the bodies of those killed by the disease, said Stop AIDS Project spokesperson Jason Riggs.

It took Broussard a year to find a dentist for a root canal.

The dentist did the procedure at three in the morning in a hospital so his other patients wouldn't know, Broussard recounted.

"It was a time when people were talking about quarantine," Riggs said of the debut of AIDS. "It was a scary time. In many ways, society closed ranks against men infected by the disease."

Doctor Eric Goosby, head of Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation, was a medical intern at San Francisco General Hospital when its beds filled with young men with pneumonia-like symptoms.

"We didn't know what we were dealing with," Goosby said. "We were flying pretty blind. The hospitals were overwhelmed with young men."

Nearly 80 percent of the hospital's patients were infected with HIV and doctors and nurses afraid of catching the disease asked to be transferred, Goosby recalled.

By 1983, nearly half of the people in San Francisco's famously gay Castro District were HIV-positive, according to medical records.

"Basically, gay men were dying left and right and not getting any support from the federal government," Riggs said.

The volunteer Stop AIDS Project was created in 1984 and consisted of strategy meetings in people's homes, according to Riggs.

"You had this extraordinary exposure to friends and lovers dying," Goosby said. "You had this huge amount of information coming to the community saying that there is something wrong here and you need to change your behavior."

Bathhouses that were havens for promiscuity in gay communities were closed. Safe sex messages were delivered by means ranging from rock bands to ad campaigns.

Virus-suppressing medicines called protease inhibitors introduced in 1994 acted as stays of execution for those infected with HIV, according to AIDS experts.

"Protease inhibitors were like a small bomb you could drop on the virus and effectively kill it," Goosby said.

"A lot of people who decided they were going to cash in their annuities and do what they wanted for the remaining few years of their lives were confronted with not dying, which led to some funny conversations."

Post-infection life spans went from 12 years to 20 to 30 if patients adhered to unforgiving drug regimens. The disease transmission rate plummeted in the city.

While the medicine purged the virus from the blood it hid in places such as the brain or liver waiting to resurface.

"It is a smart virus," Goosby said. "A heck of a virus."

Glamorization of unprotected "bare backing" sex and "irresponsible talk" about AIDS being over caused a spike in new infections in the late 1990s, according to Riggs. *AFP*

Quotes illustrating the history of AIDS

Early hopes

"We hope to have a vaccine ready for testing in about two years." Margaret Heckler, then US secretary for health and human services, 1984. Twenty-two years later, there is still no effective AIDS vaccine in sight.

"Yet another terrible disease is about to yield to patience, persistence and outright genius." Report by the US Congress' Office of Technology Assessment, February 1985.

"HIV is one of the toughest viruses we have yet battled. The only thing that will beat it is the human brain." Dennis Burton, professor at the US Scripps Research Institute, 2004.

Ignorance, stigma, poverty

"AIDS is not just God's punishment for homosexuals; it is God's punishment for the society that tolerates homosexuals." Jerry Falwell, US televangelist, 1991.

"I thought AIDS was something that happened to gays and drug addicts. A macho guy like me who loves ladies and is superfit—he doesn't get AIDS." Former US boxer Tommy Morrison, once a contender for the heavyweight crown, after he tested positive for HIV prior to a fight in 1996.

"Their families said that because they were infected with HIV, they were dead already and should sleep in a graveyard." Rob Shell, professor of population research at South Africa's University of the Western Cape, October 2003. Shell was recounting a visit to a cemetery where he found a group of people sleeping next to tombstones. They had been thrown out of their homes because they had the AIDS virus.

"I walked into a village with a reporter. We heard loud wailing coming from one of the homes. When we arrived at the house, I saw a child clutching at the mother's leg. The mother had hung herself because she had AIDS and couldn't treat herself." Gao Yaojie, 77, Chinese AIDS activist, 2004.

"Today, I call upon all of you—every global citizen—not to forget. We must seize this opportunity to demonstrate that we share a common humanity and that it matters who my sister or brother is. We must never reduce the issue to statistics." Nelson Mandela at the 15th International AIDS Conference, Bangkok, July 2004.

Grass-roots work

"Caring for a child with HIV is probably 10 times harder than caring for a healthy one. Love is not enough." Nguyen Thi Phuong, who runs a kindergarten for children with HIV in Hanoi.

"If people in China could get a condom as conveniently and naturally as buying a Chinese cabbage, the AIDS prevention function carried out by condoms could finally imbue people's lives and change their bias" against safe sex. Youth campaigner Tao Ran, backing an operation launched in September 2005 to distribute more than 300 million condoms across China.

"The advances ... are cause for hope." South African government spokesperson Joel Netshitenzhe, announcing that more than 210,000 people with HIV in South Africa now have access to antiretrovirals, May 2006. AIDS activists believe as many as 500,000 need the drugs, which South Africa belatedly started to distribute for free in 2004.

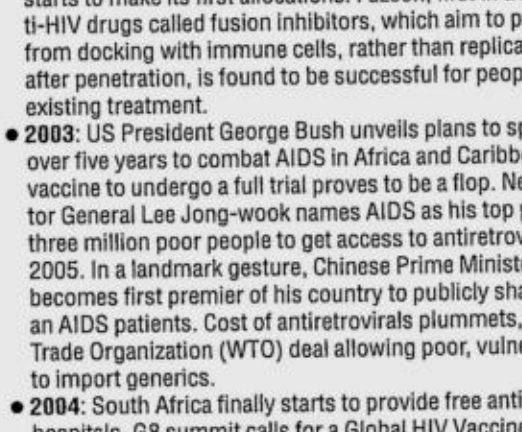
"We have a target of getting at least 13-14 million people to download the games" by the end of 2006. Hilmi Quraishi of Indian company ZMQ Software Systems, which markets an AIDS-awareness cricket game in which a "Demons XI" play the "Safety XI."

Turning point in epidemic

"This is a top priority with us. Yes, there's no question about the seriousness of this and the need to find an answer." President Ronald Reagan, ending a prolonged and controversial silence on AIDS, pledges half a billion dollars in research funds. September 1985. *AFP*

Timeline

- **1920s or 1930s (speculated):** Simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV), which destroys immune cells in apes, leaps the species barrier to humans after a bushmeat hunter in Western-Central Africa is bitten by an infected animal or handles infected meat.
- **1978**: Gays in the United States and Sweden start to show the first signs of a disease that will later be called AIDS.
- **1981**: Eight young homosexuals in New York are diagnosed with Kaposi's Sarcoma, a skin cancer that usually occurs in older people, while five Los Angeles gays fall sick with a rare form of pneumonia. Together, these clusters alert the US authorities to something new: a disease that wrecks the immune system and exposes the body to opportunistic disease.
- **1982**: AIDS gets its name—acquired immune deficiency syndrome. A 20-month-old child dies from AIDS-related infection after a blood transfusion, providing first clear signs that AIDS can be transmitted by other than homosexual contact.
- **1983**: France's Pasteur Institute, led by Luc Montagnier, isolates a virus that penetrates white blood cells, causing AIDS. They call the agent lympadenopathy-associated virus, or LAV. The first signs, derived from African men in Europe, emerge that heterosexuals can become infected, unleashing widespread anxiety. World Health Organization (WHO) sets up global surveillance. Known number of AIDS cases (US only) is 3,064 by the end of the year.
- **1984**: US scientist Robert Gallo announces he has isolated the virus, calling it HTLV-III, but it becomes clear that the agent is the same as LAV, identified a year earlier in France.
- **1985**: First commercial tests for the AIDS virus help to clear blood banks of contaminated blood. First International Conference on AIDS, held in Atlanta, Georgia. Movie actor Rock Hudson becomes first major public figure known to have died of AIDS. AIDS cases now reported from every region of the world. First case of AIDS reported in China.
- **1986**: The agent that causes AIDS is officially known as the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- **1987**: First anti-HIV drug, azidovudine (AZT) is approved after trials showed it slowed, but did not cure, the progress of the virus. AZT is a class of drug called reverse transcriptase inhibitor, which impedes virus replication. President Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia announces his son has died of AIDS, a landmark in the campaign against stigma in Africa. US President Ronald Reagan, who had been accused of neglecting AIDS, delivers speech that describes the disease as "public enemy No.1."
- **1990**: Death of Ryan White, a young American HIV-infected hemophiliac whose barring from school, because of HIV infection, unleashed a campaign against AIDS prejudice.
- **1991**: Death of Freddy Mercury, lead singer with rock group Queen. US basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson announces he has HIV.
- **1992**: Tennis star Arthur Ashe announces he was infected by a blood transfusion nine years earlier. Trial in France of health officials accused of allowing HIV-contaminated blood to be used in transfusions.
- **1993**: Worrying signs emerge of resistance to AZT among long-term users. Death from AIDS of Russian ballet star Rudolf Nureyev. AIDS cases start to surge in South Africa.
- **1994**: Studies show AZT can dramatically cut mother-to-child transmission of HIV.
- **1995**: Two new classes of anti-HIV drugs, also targeting replication, are approved: protease inhibitors and non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors. Used in combination, they can reduce the viral load to below detectable levels, an achievement that triggers optimism that a cure has been found.
- **1996**: United Nations sets up the Joint United Nations Programme on AIDS (UNAIDS). Introduction of the viral load test, a yardstick of disease progression. Epidemic starts to worsen in Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union, India, China.
- **1997**: Number of AIDS deaths drops in the US for first time since 1981. Evidence emerges of toxic side-effects, resistance to the new antiretroviral drugs.
- **1998**: Hopes that the antiretroviral "cocktail" is a cure are dashed. Evidence emerges of HIV "reservoirs" where the virus holes up and rebounds if the drugs are stopped.
- **2000**: Southern Africa becomes the epicenter of what is now a global pandemic. In Botswana, up to one in four adults and 40 percent of pregnant women have HIV. South African President Thabo Mbeki is attacked around the world for questioning that AIDS is caused by HIV. Drugs companies start to cut prices for poor countries. UN states call for spread of HIV/AIDS to be halted and thrown into reverse by 2015 as part of Millennium Development Goals.
- **2001**: Indian drugs company Cipla vows to make cheap generics of AIDS medications, putting pressure on multinationals to cut prices further. UN Secretary General Kofi Annan calls for an AIDS "war chest" of between $7-10 billion per year, compared to the $1 billion currently being spent. AIDS becomes leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa. "Declaration of Commitment" by UN General Assembly calls for global pandemic to be halted and reversed by 2015.
- **2002**: The Global Fund for Fighting AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria starts to make its first allocations. Fuzeon, first in a new class of anti-HIV drugs called fusion inhibitors, which aim to prevent the virus from docking with immune cells, rather than replicating within them after penetration, is found to be successful for people resistant to existing treatment.
- **2003**: US President George Bush unveils plans to spend $15 billion over five years to combat AIDS in Africa and Caribbean. First HIV vaccine to undergo a full trial proves to be a flop. New WHO Director General Lee Jong-wook names AIDS as his top priority, calls for three million poor people to get access to antiretrovirals by end of 2005. In a landmark gesture, Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao becomes first premier of his country to publicly shake the hands of an AIDS patients. Cost of antiretrovirals plummets, helped by World Trade Organization (WTO) deal allowing poor, vulnerable countries to import generics.
- **2004**: South Africa finally starts to provide free antiretrovirals in hospitals. G8 summit calls for a Global HIV Vaccine Enterprise that will beef up coordination and exchanges of information among the world's vaccine scientists.
- **2005**: WHO's "Three by Five" initiative falls far short of goal, reaching only 1.3 million out of a hoped-for three million. But it is also praised for mobilizing political commitment and funds and building medical infrastructure.
- **2006**: **February**—China issues first policy guidelines on dealing with AIDS epidemic, including requirement for local governments to offer free drugs and testing.
- **March**—Lancet study says the number of new HIV infections in southern India has plunged by a third over four years, apparently due to safe-sex practices.
- **May**—UNAIDS says more than 25 million people have now been killed by AIDS. But it revises downward to 38.6 million the total living today with HIV/AIDS and says the overall infection rate has stabilized.
- **June**—UN members set goal of universal access to HIV/AIDS care by 2010.
- **Aug 13-18**—16th International AIDS Conference, in Toronto, Canada. *AFP*



UGANDANS hold candles during a commemoration service for children who lost parents to AIDS, in the northern town of Lira Aug. 5. REUTERS

Obrador digs in for long fight over vote count

MEXICO CITY—STREET BLOCKADES clogging the heart of the Mexican capital dragged into their second week as leftist presidential hopeful Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador said he was digging in for a long battle against alleged fraud in the July 2 election.

Speaking to tens of thousands of followers in Mexico City's main Zocalo plaza on Sunday, Lopez Obrador said the protests would intensify and called for a massive demonstration on Monday outside the court that ruled against his demand for a full recount.

The fiery leftist speaker asked his followers to remain indefinitely in their sprawling protest camps that brought much of the capital's normally thriving center to a halt. The blockades have snarled traffic, costing the city an estimated US$23 million (euro18 million) a day in lost commerce.

An official count from the July 2 vote found that conservative Felipe Calderon, of President Vicente Fox's National Action Party, beat Lopez Obrador by less than 0.6 percent, or about 240,000 votes.

On Sunday, Calderon said Mexico's institutions were strong enough to survive attacks from "anti-democrats," an apparent jab at the leftist protest movement.

"The solidness of our institutions has overcome the attacks of anti-democrats, anarchists and intolerance," Calderon told a gathering of his party's elected lawmakers.

Lopez Obrador said he would not drop his demand for a recount of every vote in the election, despite the Federal Electoral Tribunal's decision Saturday in favor of a partial recount. Electoral officials will begin sifting through ballots from nine percent of the nation's 130,000 polling places Wednesday, wrapping up their work by the weekend.

Before Lopez Obrador's speech, protesters chanted in favor of seizing Mexico City's airport and some suggested taking over Congress, moves that would almost certainly trigger confrontations with federal authorities. Security has been increased at both facilities.

While the leftist candidate did not say whether he would eventually approve such tactics, he did promise "new actions, new measures of civil resistance" and asked his followers "to prepare ourselves for a struggle that may last longer."

"Even if I wind up alone, if I have the conviction that I am fighting for a just cause, I would continue, stubbornly," Lopez Obrador said.

Late Sunday, the leftist's supporters brought a new element into their nonviolent protests, with thousands standing hand in hand to form a human chain along miles of Mexico City streets.

"This chain is a symbol of solidarity and strength in our struggle against this fraud," said Edith Calderon, a doctor who was braving light rain to link hands with fellow protesters.

Lopez Obrador's supporters were enraged Saturday when the tribunal ruled against their demands for a ballot-by-ballot recount that they argue will show the leftist was the true winner of the election.

The tribunal has until Sept. 6 to declare a president-elect or annul the vote. The partial recount could swing the vote in favor of Lopez Obrador, if electoral officials—supervised by judges—find evidence of widespread problems.

Mexico's Federal Electoral Institute, an autonomous agency often credited for bringing democracy to Mexico, has said the election was clean and fair, defending the work of thousands of volunteer poll workers. Most international observers have said they failed to note major problems. *AP*

OBRADOR, right, greets supporters during a rally in Mexico's city Zocalo square Aug. 6. REUTERS

15 aid workers slain in Sri Lanka after fierce battles

COLOMBO, SRI LANKA—FIFTEEN TAMILS working for a French aid agency were found slain in northeastern Sri Lanka following fierce battles between Tamil rebels and the government in a reservoir dispute, relief agency officials said Monday.

Separately, at least 15 Tamil civilians were killed when government forces fired artillery on rebels controlling the reservoir, a pro-rebel Web-site reported, while the Defense Ministry said a top police officer was killed in a bomb blast Monday in central Sri Lanka.

The aid workers—11 men and four women—were doing post-tsunami relief for the French agency Action Against Hunger in the seaside town of Muttur, the scene of heavy battles that have plunged the country into one of its worst crises since its 2002 cease-fire.

The violence was sparked July 20 when rebels halted the flow of a reservoir in the northeastern region to nearby government-held villages, in what they said was retaliation for the government reneging on a deal to boost the water supply in rebel areas.

The bodies of the aid workers were found late Friday, Action Against Hunger official Eric Fort said. The bodies had bullet wounds and most of them were laying face down, other officials at the agency said earlier, speaking on condition of anonymity.

"We are trying to get the bodies to the families, but we are not succeeding," Eric Fort, an official at the agency said Monday. He did not elaborate, and the Muttur area remained sealed off by the military, which beat back a rebel offensive to take it.

No comment was immediately available from the government.

The bomb blast in central Sri Lanka killed a top police official in charge of training anti-terrorism commandos, the Defense Ministry said. *AP*

Chad chooses cash, China over Taiwan

N'DJAMENA—CHAD'S DECISION TO BREAK diplomatic ties with Taiwan and reestablish links with Beijing is motivated by financial self-interest and the advantages of a relationship with a major global force, observers said Sunday.

"The interest of the state outweighs all other considerations," said a senior Chadian diplomat speaking on condition of anonymity.

Chad, a desperately poor country, menaced by rebellions, in conflict in different ways with neighbouring Sudan and the World Bank, broke off relations with China after 25 years in favour of Taipei in 1997.

"For N'Djamena and (President Idriss) Deby (Itno), in view of the general situation it's better to have Beijing with you than against you," said a French specialist, who found nothing surprising about Chad's change of heart, other than its rapidity.

"Apparently the Chadian delegation sent to Khartoum in July (to repair links damaged by Chad's accusations against Sudan of backing rebels) got in touch with the Chinese ambassador in Sudan," he said.

Chad's chief preoccupation is financial, he said.

"Chad will have a lot to gain economically with Beijing, besides the resumption of all the projects left behind by Taiwan," said the diplomat.

Taiwan has provided Chad with major financial and technical aid in several areas—including roads, water supply and education—but "one can imagine that this U-turn will be accompanied by Chinese financial backing greater than that of Taiwan," the French specialist said.

The alliance with Beijing, "which appears as the anti-World Bank," strengthens Chad's hand in dealing with the bank, he said.

Chad and the bank have been at loggerheads since January over the spending of oil revenues and the bank suspended payments until an agreement was signed last month. *AFP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Hong Kong spy law faces stiff opposition

HONG KONG—Rights activists vowed to continue their fight against a new snooping law Monday as government officials sought to quell fears it would curb civic freedoms.

The bill allows authorities to monitor private communications with telephone wire taps, e-mail scans and other covert techniques.

Officials say it is necessary to help protect law and order but critics say it erodes civil liberties and would foster an atmosphere of suspicion of authorities.

A day after it was approved by lawmakers, following a marathon debate that saw an angry walk-out by opponents, activists were considering ways to continue their protest.

"We are examining ways we can ensure this legislation is corrected," said lawmaker James To, security spokesperson for the leading opposition Democratic Party.

The bill was forced through after a court censured the government for having no covert surveillance law on the statute book.

The city's highest court gave officials until Tuesday to pass relevant legislation.

As a result, opponents say the government was forced to hastily draw up legislation that was flawed and full of loopholes.

During the record 57-hour debate opposition lawmakers sought some 200 amendments, all of which were refused.

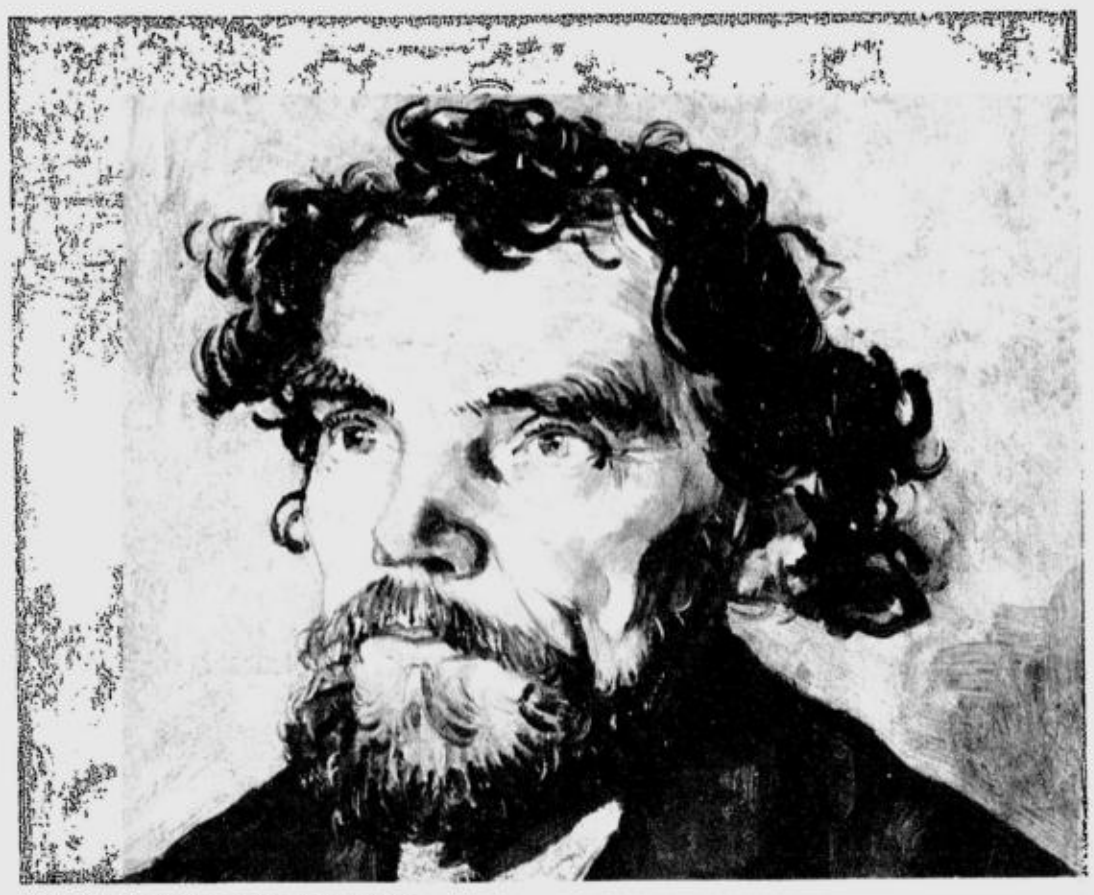
"There is going to be a lot of challenges to this in the courts," To said.

To and fellow legislator Margaret Ng, a top-level barrister, had sought to win a two-year expiry date for the law, in a so-called "sunset clause" that would allow time to rewrite the bill.

Law experts, however, said any kinks in the legislation could be ironed out in the course of legal proceedings as judges begin giving their interpretations of its provisions.

The bill comes at a time of raised concern over the role the government plays in the lives of people in this former British colony since sovereignty switched to communist China in 1997.

Although officials vowed the law would be used only to fight crime and not for political purposes, activists warn that anyone remotely connected to politics, nongovernment organizations or who had a record of speaking publicly against the government could expect to be spied on. *AFP*



$15 MILLION—OR 15 CENTS
British experts say the most prized painting of the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne, a Vincent van Gogh portrait shown above, is a forgery. The "Head of a Man" is valued at around US$15 million, but the gallery director conceded it would be virtually worthless if proved to be a fake. AFP

More US states expand citizens' right to shoot in self-defense

IN THE LAST YEAR, 15 STATES have enacted laws that expand the right of self-defense, allowing crime victims to use deadly force in situations that might formerly have subjected them to prosecution for murder.

Supporters call them "stand your ground" laws. Opponents call them "shoot first" laws.

Thanks to this sort of law, a prostitute in Port Richey, Florida, who killed her 72-year-old client with his own gun rather than flee was not charged last month.

Similarly, the police in Clearwater, Florida, did not arrest a man who shot a neighbor in early June after a shouting match over putting out garbage, though the authorities say they are still reviewing the evidence.

The first of the new laws took effect in Florida in October, and cases under it are now reaching prosecutors and juries there. The other laws, mostly in Southern and Midwestern states, were enacted this year, according to the National Rifle Association, which has promoted them enthusiastically.

The Florida law, which served as a model for the others, gives people the right to use deadly force against intruders entering their homes. They no longer need to prove they feared for their safety, only that the person they killed intruded unlawfully and forcefully. The law also extends this principle to vehicles.

In addition, the law does away with an earlier requirement that a person attacked in a public place must retreat if possible. Now, that same person, in the law's words, "has no duty to retreat and has the right to stand his or her ground and meet force with force, including deadly force."

The NRA said it would lobby for versions of the law in eight more states in 2007.

Many prosecutors oppose the laws, saying they are unnecessary at best and pernicious at worst. "They're basically giving citizens more rights to use deadly force than we give police officers, and with less review," said Paul A. Logli, president of the National District Attorneys Association.

But some legal experts doubt the laws will make a practical difference. "It's inconceivable to me that one in a hundred Floridians could tell you how the law has changed," said Gary Kleck, who teaches criminology at Florida State University.

Even before the new laws, Kleck added, claims of self-defense were often accepted.

"In the South," he said, "they more or less give the benefit of the doubt to the alleged victim's account." *NYT*

Messages

Congratulations to all the men and women of the St. Luke's Medical Center Heart Institute as you celebrate your 20th Anniversary, with the theme, "20 Years to the Heartland: A Celebration of Excellence."

For the past 20 years, St. Luke's Medical Center Heart Institute has rendered valuable service to many people with heart ailments. Through the years, you have also provided indigent patients broader and easier access to affordable healthcare services.

It is my hope that you will continue to serve the public with utmost dedication. Taking care of our sick, especially the poor, is a basic and unending duty of the state. But we need the support of institutions like St. Luke's Medical Center to deliver quality but affordable healthcare services to our countrymen. Together, I am confident that we can beat the odds and provide a better life for our people.

Congratulations to all of you and Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines

My warmest greetings to the administration and staff of St. Luke's Medical Center Heart Institute as they celebrate their 20th Year Anniversary with the theme "20 Years to the Heartland: "A Celebration of Excellence" and a Post-Graduate Course entitled "At The Heart of the Matter on Matters of the Heart."

I commend your initiative of continuously promoting essential ideas and innovations for the effective development and improvement of medical services in the country.

May this scientific event provide positive avenues in the promotion of quality and valuable responses in order to attain higher professional relevance not only in our country but also in the international field.

FRANCISCO T. DUQUE, III, MD, MSc
Secretary
Department of Health

Greetings! It is with endearing memorable thoughts that we celebrate the St. Luke's Heart Institute's 20 years of existence. Indeed, we have traveled a long path since that epochal year in 1986, where we found our roots germinating from a heart station with just very basic equipment available confined in one small room. Currently, we have evolved into a full-pledge world class Heart Institute, widely acclaimed as a premier cardiovascular facility with a full complement of postgraduate fellowship training in cardiology. We are forever grateful to our visionary founding director, Dr. Homobono B. Calleja and his group of pioneering pilgrim cardiologists who adopted the Heart Institute as their home. Likewise, all these achievements would not have been made possible without the support and trust accorded to us by the St. Luke's Medical Center management.

The theme for this year's celebration entitled, "20 Years to the Heartland: A Celebration of Excellence" will include activities that will showcase what the St. Luke's Heart Institute can offer to help alleviate cardiovascular disease in this country. We are most fortunate to have Dr. Adelaida Iboleon-Dy as our Overall Chair for this event. Together with her energetic and dynamic working committees, they have prepared important and meaningful program of activities that will make all of us remember this event for a long time.

Let us all participate and renew acquaintances, as well as meet new ones.

ANTONIO S. SIBULO, JR., MD
Director

It is with great pride that we celebrate the Heart Institute's 20th Anniversary. We celebrate the process of truly becoming the heartland. It is a tribute to the men and women whose faithful support, devotion and dedication has made it possible for us to make that quick leap to a totally new level of excellence that only a few centers may experience.

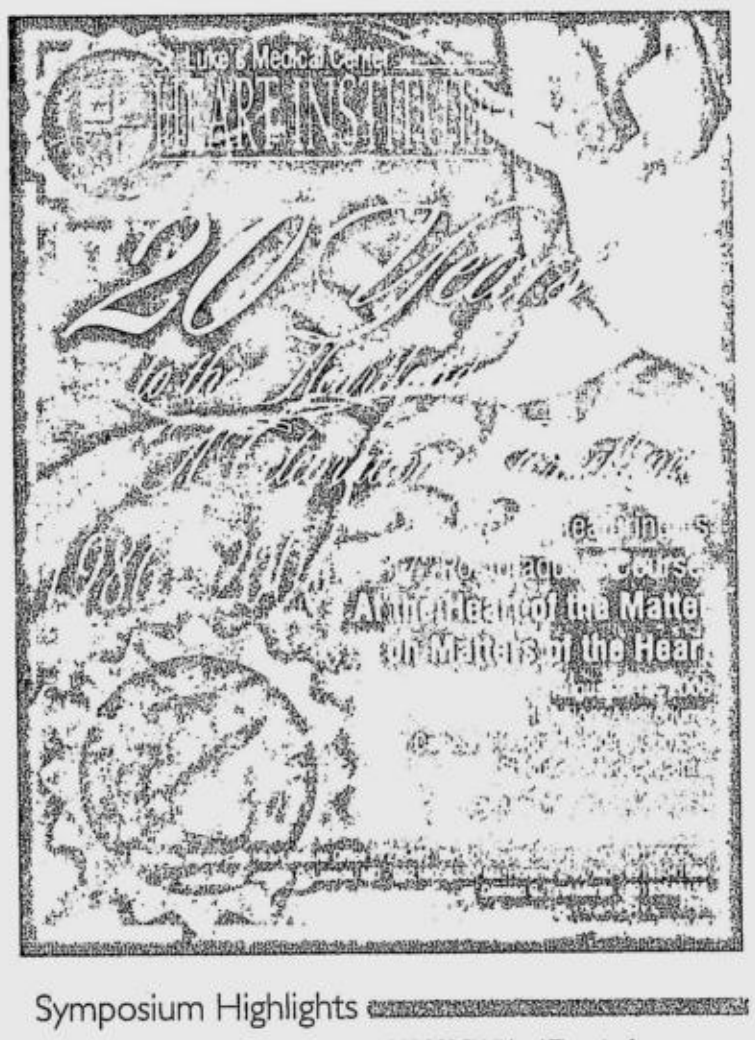
These achievements however have not been effortless. Inspired by great men with big hearts, the Heart Institute has been "home" to many experts in varying fields of cardiology, bound by the same ideals coupled with an environment that has tried to be not only loving but supportive and nurturing as well.

We showcase our 17th Post-Graduate Course entitled "At the Heart of the Matter On Matters of the Heart" carefully and skillfully planned to keep our commitment in promoting continuing medical education to trainees, non-specialists and even to specialists. We take a bigger leap too in launching the second book of algorithms to highlight the Institute's efforts in unifying, standardizing and updating management strategies to promote excellent cardiovascular patient care.

We chronicle our 20 years in a coffee table book as a testament of our shared history and continuing commitment to better our craft.

We recognize that the path to greatness is not always clear, and is seldom easy. We will persevere however as we look forward to many more twenty-year celebrations proving to all that the Heart Institute will always be The Heartland!

MARIA ADELAIDA IBOLEON-DY, MD
Overall Chair, 20th Year Anniversary



Symposium Highlights

Day 1: August 9, 2006
Wednesday

7:30-9:00 AM Registration
BREAKFAST SYMPOSIUM (Merck Inc.)
9:00-9:30 AM OPENING CEREMONIES

ACUTE CORONARY SYNDROME ISSUES
Chairman Rene V. Reyes, MD
Co-Chair Joanna Teresa Margarita L. Manalo, MD

9:30-9:50 AM "Multi-vessel CAD Strategies: PCI vs. CABG...To cath or to cut!" Romeo D. Saavedra, MD

9:50-10:10 AM "Antiplatelets and Anticoagulants in CAD... Keeping track of the new therapeutic trend" John O. Anonuevo, MD

10:10-10:30 AM Open Forum

10:30-10:50 AM BREAK

2nd HB CALLEJA LECTURE
Chairman Vivian L. Serrano, MD
Co-chair Federick C. Cheng, MD

10:50-11:30 AM "Getting into the core: The cellular basis of ventricular arrhythmias" William T. Chua, MD

LIPID ISSUES
Chairman Reynaldo C. Neri, MD
Co-chair Ma. Lourdes E. Bunyi, MD

11:30-11:50 AM "Combination Therapy in Dyslipidemia... The more the merrier!" Vincent V. Valencia, MD

11:50-12:00 NN Open Forum

12:00-2:00 PM LUNCH SYMPOSIUM (Sanofi-Aventis)

HEART FAILURE ISSUES
Chairman Erwin O. del Rosario, MD
Co-chair Maita S. Senadrin, MD

2:00-2:20 PM "Novel Therapies for Congestive Heart Failure...What lies ahead?" Antonio S. Sibulo, Jr., MD

2:20-2:40 PM "Exercise in Congestive Heart Failure..The great benefit of every little twist and turn" Leandro C. Bongosia, MD

2:40-3:00 PM Open Forum

3:00-3:20 PM BREAK

HYPERTENSION ISSUES
Chairman Cipriano V. delos Reyes, MD
Co-chair Ma. Rowena S. Pascual, MD

3:20-3:40 PM "As good as it gets.. Beyond BP lowering benefits of antihypertensives" Gregorio G. Rogelio, MD

3:40-3:50 PM Open Forum

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE
Chairman Laura R. Guerrero-Trinchera, MD
Co-chair Andrew Angelo E. Carreon, MD

3:50-4:50 PM "Wealth Management: Use it or Lose it?" Mr. Francisco J. Colayco

Day 2: August 10, 2006
Thursday

7:30-9:00 AM BREAKFAST SYMPOSIUM (Servier)

ARRHYTHMIA ISSUES
Chairman Edgar Y. Ongoco, MD
Co-chair Elma Joy B. Bagahansol-Rivera, MD

9:00-9:20 AM "Getting off beat after a heartache... Common arrhythmias post-MI" (Interactive Session) Erdie C. Fadregulan, MD

9:20-9:40 AM "The Fast and the Furious.. Ventricular arrhythmias and their management" Anthony B. King, MD

9:40-10:00 AM Open Forum / BREAK

10:00-12:00 NN ASTRAZENECA RESEARCH PAPER PRESENTATION
Chairman Fabio Enrique B. Posas, MD
Co-chair Ofelia A. Najos-Valencia, MD

12:00-2:00 PM LUNCH SYMPOSIUM (AstraZeneca Phils.)

VALVULAR ISSUES
Chairman Roland L. delos Reyes, MD
Co-chair Dennis Jose V. Sulit, MD

2:00-2:20 PM "Mitral Valve Prolapse: Facts and Fallacies" Loewe O. Go, MD

2:20-2:30 PM Open Forum

VASCULAR ISSUES
Chairman Mane Simonette V. Ganzon, MD
Co-chair Carlo John M. Manalo, MD
2:30-2:50 PM "Medical Therapy for Peripheral Arterial Disease..Get your feet back on solid ground" Fatima R. Collado, MD

2:50-3:00 PM Open Forum

3:00-3:20 PM BREAK

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES
Chairman Edward-Bengie L. Magsombol, MD
Co-chair Ma. Imelda L. Balajadia, MD

3:20-3:40 PM "Multi-modality Imaging in Cardiac Disease: A deluge of choices" Maria Helga F. Ferrera-Sta. Maria, MD

3:40-3:50 PM Open Forum

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE
Chairman Cecilia D. Payot, MD
Co-chair Nancy B. Borja-Chio, MD

3:50-4:50 PM "Stress Management: The key to success without extra stress" Mr. Francis J. Kong

Day 3: August 11, 2006
Friday

7:30-9:00 AM BREAKFAST SYMPOSIUM (Pfizer Inc.)

HOW-TO-SESSIONS
Chairman Ma. Paz Mildred F. Luque, MD
Co-chair Francisco P. Dalangin, MD

9:00-9:40 AM Recognition and Approach to the Different Cardiac Murmurs Romeo A. Divinagracia, MD

9:40-10:20 AM Practical Interpretation of Difficult ECGs Giselle G. Gervacio-Domingo, MD

10:20-10:40 AM BREAK

10:40-11:20 AM Basic Concepts in Treadmill Exercise Testing Helen N. Ong-Garcia, MD

11:20-12:00 NN Radiology in Cardiology Orlando R. Ignacio, MD

12:00-2:00 PM LUNCH SYMPOSIUM (Schering Plough)

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■ Davao FA, NCR lady booters shut out rivals /A23

■ Sharapova snaps Clijsters streak to rule WTA tourney /A24

Knights regain top, slip past Altas

Dolphins lean on reserves to best Blazers

By Jasmine W. Payo

HARDLY SHOWING SIGNS OF exhaustion, Boyet Bautista and Aaron Aban again came through for the Letran Knights in a 66-54 victory over the University of Perpetual Help Altas in the NCAA men's basketball tournament yesterday at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Bautista and Aban, who participated in the PBA rookie camp early in the day, secured the win by joining hands in a 10-0 run in the last five minutes that pushed the defending champion Knights within a win away from claiming an outright Final Four berth.

"I don't think their application in the (PBA) draft will affect our campaign," said Letran coach Louie Alas. "I trust these guys, they're always ready to play."

Bautista shared top scoring honors with rookie forward Dino Daa with 14 points apiece. Aban added 10 markers in the victory that gave the Knights a share of top spot with the idle San Beda Lions at 8-1.

Still, the sputtering finish hardly impressed Alas.

"This is one of our games that I wasn't fulfilled," he said. "We're becoming inconsistent again. But I'm not discounting the efforts of Perpetual, they played pretty well. But if we want to go the next level, we can't play like this. We were very passive and we lacked mental toughness."

And Alas, indeed, had a point. The Knights posted a 52-44 advantage just two minutes in the fourth period, but got too comfortable quite early.

Gil Manuel took over for the the Altas, drilling in seven straight points to slice the deficit to two, 56-54, before the Letran stars came to the rescue.

The Altas surprisingly played tough even without veteran Vladimir Joe, who will be out for the rest of the season after tearing the MCL (medial collateral ligament) on his left knee.

With the absence of Joe, who averaged 11 points in the first round, the Altas' campaign turned even bleaker as their record dropped to 2-7.

In the second seniors' game, the Philippine Christian U Dolphins banked on their reserves to repulse the St. Benilde Blazers, 79-70, and strengthen their hold of the third spot at 7-2.

Sophomore forward Lei Navarro shot 13 points for the Dolphins, who also got key contributions from second stringers Clarence Graham and Sam Hermosa. Jason Castro and Beau Belga added 12 markers apiece.

The Blazers abandoned their Final Four bid at 1-8.

Earlier in junior play, the PCU Baby Dolphins claimed their sixth win in eight games with an 83-56 rout over the St. Benilde-La Salle Greenies. The Perpetual Altalettes also nipped the winless Letran Squires, 70-66, for a 2-6 slate.

The scores:

First Game (Srs)

LETRAN 66—Bautista 14, Daa 14, Aban 10, Mondragon 9, Guevarra 6, Faundo 5, Quinday 4, Dangcal 2, Balneg 1, del Rosario 1, Realista 0, Ranises 0.

PERPETUAL 54—Manuel 11, Bauzon 10, Lee 9, Misa 7, Mendoza 7, Kong 4, Racho 2, Perturbos 2, Reyes 2.

Quarters: 12-12, 27-33, 47-42, 66-54

Second Game (Srs)

PCU 79—Navarro 13, Castro 12, Belga 12, Graham 8, Hermosa 8, Garrido 7, Santos 5, Amparado 5, David 5, Vidal 2, Salem 1, Espinas 1, McCoy 0, Chen 0.

ST. BENILDE 70—Johnston 16, Urra M. 14, Libunao 11, Layug 11, Manlapaz 4, Manding 4, Robles 2, Urra D. 2, Umlas 2, Cadiz 2, Aldover 2, Sevilla 0, Trillo 0, Devaras 0, David 0.

Quarters: 17-23, 38-36, 59-51, 79-70

LETRAN'S Kirk Del Rosario (left) challenges y Perpetual Help's Ricmar Pertubos under the basket in yesterday's game. ERIK ARAZAS

No S'ball World Series stint for Bacolod girls

THE BACOLOD JUNIOR SQUAD SCHEDuled to compete in the World Series for girls' softball was stricken off the roster of entries for the 13-14 championship in Kirkland, Washington, which will start next week.

But Little League Philippines executive assistant Chito Gonzales said everything is being done to save the participation of the Bacolod team, which was originally booked to leave yesterday.

Gonzales said he was informed by John Chadwick, tournament director of the 13-14 age division, that Bacolod was removed from the list of participants based on instructions from the Little League Inc. headquarters in Williamsports, Pennsylvania.

Some officials feel the failure of the Bacolod Senior team to take part in a separate event for the 14-16 division may have been the reason for the withdrawal of the US stint of the Bacolod Junior squad.

Despite guaranteed financial support of $25,000 from LLI, the Bacolod Senior squad failed to book a flight in time for the tournament which started yesterday in Delaware.

Sources said the team's failure to leave was blamed on Bacolod Little League Charter's inability to pay an old debt of P270,000 to Jaunts Travel Agency which had arranged a trip for another squad last year in Kirkland, Washington.

Meanwhile, 11 members of Team Manila (10 players and one assistant coach) left last night for Kalamazoo, Michigan, site of the 16-18 girls' softball event.

The team is carrying the colors of the Philippines and Asia Pacific.

The second batch of Team Manila, made up of delegation head Robert Evangelista, head coach Filomeno "Boy" Codiñera and the remaining five players will follow on Friday, according to Manila Little League Charter president Rep. Miles Roces.

Isip shines in rookie camp

MARK ISIP SCATTERED 20 POINTS TO POWER the Yellow squad to a 99-98 win over the Red Team in the first day of the PBA Rookie Camp at the Philsports Arena.

Isip's performance caught the attention of newly installed Ginebra coach Jong Uichico, who declared that the 6-foot-5 forward is a first round draft material.

The PBA Draft Day is on Aug. 20 at the Market! Market! in Taguig City.

"He's got good post up moves and good footwork. Very impressive. He's definitely a first round material," said Uichico.

Kelly Williams, the lone Fil-Am aspirant who played for the Red squad, was also impressive. He tallied 17 points but his offense was overshadowed by his defensive skills.

The 6-foot-7, 215 lbs forward, who was given a lot of playing minutes by assistant coach Art dela Cruz, highlighted his game with 9 rebounds three steals and two shot blocks.

Magnum Membrere and unheralded Ronnie Bughao, two guards with contrasting styles, also hugged the limelight.

Membrere, who played for the Yellow Team, had a poor start but picked up his rhythm in the second half and went on to score 14 points including 4-of-8 shooting from the three-point range. He also had six assists and seven rebounds.

Bughao, a certified playmaker, turned in 14 points that went with his nine assists and nine rebounds.

The scores:

YELLOW 99—Isip 20, Membrere 14, Kalaw 13, Perseveranda 13, Santos 11, Llanete 11, Ibanes 6, Vidad, De Castro 5.

RED 98—Rizada 22, Williams 17, Bughao 14, Reguera 13, Magsumbol 12, Mallari 12, Alonzo 2, Daa 6, Cristobal 0.

STANDINGS	W	L
Ateneo	6	0
Univ of East	4	2
Adamson	3	3
National U	2	4
Univ of Phils	2	4
Far Eastern	2	4
Santo Tomas	2	4

GAMES THURSDAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 noon—National vs Far Eastern (Jrs)
2 p.m.—UE vs Adamson (Jrs)
4 p.m.—UST vs UP (Jrs)

Falcon Bono emerges UAAP stats frontrunner

By Jasmine W. Payo

LABELED AS AN UNDERACHIEVER in the past, Ken Bono of the Adamson Falcons finally shook off the tag by topping the statistical race at the end of the first round of the UAAP men's basketball tournament Sunday.

Bono, the massive 6-foot-5 center who towed the Falcons to a surprising third-best 3-3 record, ranked second in the scoring department with a 20.3 points average and fourth in rebounds at 10.5 per game.

JC Intal of the unbeaten Ateneo Blue Eagles finished second with averages of 15.3 points and 6.7 rebounds per game. The senior forward, displaying an all-around performance this year, also occupied third in assists at 5.2 a game and seventh in steals at 1.2 per outing.

Another versatile forward stood out as Edwin Asoro of the National Bulldogs placed third. A Mythical Five member last season, Asoro continued to pour in huge numbers with 19 markers, 10.7 boards, 1.5 steals and a league-leading 2 blocks per contest.

The only guard to barge in the top five was Bonbon Custodio of the University of the East Warriors, who posted a third-best 19.7 points on top of 4.7 rebounds, 3.5 assists and 1.5 steals.

Jervy Cruz, the Santo Tomas Tigers' sensational rookie center, claimed fifth spot after norming 16 points, a league-best 11.8 rebounds and 1.3 blocks.

Ateneo's Doug Kramer held sixth place (15.7 ppg and 8.8 rpg), while top scorer Jojo Duncil of UST (21.4 ppg and 6.4 rpg) finished seventh in the official rankings released yesterday by league statistician Soho Connect, Imperium Technology and PLDT Vibe.

Rounding up the top 10 were Marvin Cruz, the University of the Philippines Maroons' point guard who ruled the steals department (18 ppg and 1.8 spg), UE's Mark Borboran (15 ppg and 7.7 rpg), and Far Eastern Tamaraws' Jonas Villanueva (16.3 ppg, 1.7 spg).

SMC-Pilipinas sputters anew against Qatar

Winless Filipinos finish dead last

DOHA, QATAR—THE SMC-PILIPINAS SQUAD GAVE IT A FINAL GO BUT IT JUST DIDN'T HAVE the strength to finish the job Tuesday.

Playing their fifth game in as many nights, the Filipinos dominated the first half against world championship-bound Qatar before taking a 79-68 loss that left them dead last in a field of four in the Al-Emadi International basketball championship at the Al-Gharafa Sports Club here.

Later in the evening, African champion Angola defeated Latvia, 83-77, to claim the championship.

"Again, the fatigue factor set in," said national mentor Chot Reyes.

"But remember, we played a team that has been together for years. All of us know that had we been able to practise more and send the best team here, we would've beaten Qatar handily."

From a 20-20 standoff at the end of the first period, former Ateneo teammates Larry Fonacier and LA Tenorio ignited a big tear highlighted by a Mick Pennisi four-point play to give SMC-Pilipinas a 38-26 bubble.

At halftime, the Filipinos still led, 45-35.

Fatigue, however, began to take its toll in the second half for the Nationals.

Successive three-pointers

Ali Saeed found his range, hitting three-pointers in succession to lead a comeback that had the hosts wresting the upper hand and going into the final quarter toting a 58-55 lead.

Another run at the start of the fourth canto gave Qatar a 68-59 edge and the Filipinos, playing without the hurting Kerby Raymundo, never recovered from that spurt.

Although winless in five games, the Accel-outfitted SMC-Pilipinas five is heading home with heads held high.

"I hate the losing, but I love the learning," Reyes said. "The things we learned playing the African champions and a strong team like Latvia and even Qatar are unquantifiable. Two of these three are bound for the world championships.

"I'm sure the experience has made everyone on this team better individuals."

Saeed led Qatar with 22 points while Willie Miller and Pennisi shared top scoring honors for the Filipinos with 11 points apiece.

"I take my hat off to Willie," said Reyes of his prized backcourtman, who also led the team in rebounds (4) and assists (5). "I appreciate his taking on a leadership role on this team."

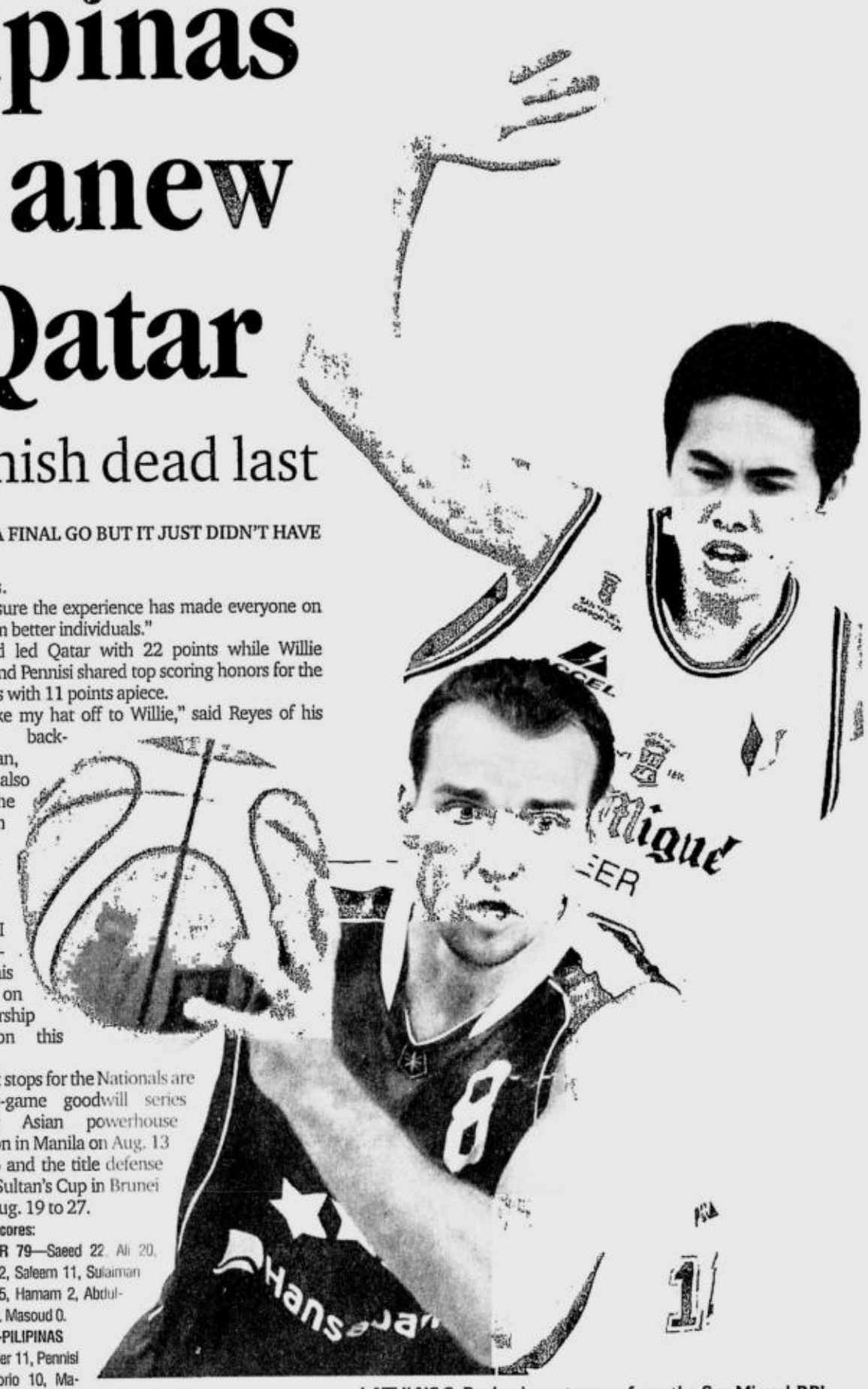
Next stops for the Nationals are a two-game goodwill series against Asian powerhouse Lebanon in Manila on Aug. 13 and 16 and the title defense of the Sultan's Cup in Brunei from Aug. 19 to 27.

The scores:

QATAR 79—Saeed 22, Ali 20, Daoud 12, Saleem 11, Sulaiman 5, Turki 5, Hamam 2, Abdulghader 2, Masoud 0.

SMC-PILIPINAS 68—Miller 11, Pennisi 11, Tenorio 10, Mamaril 9, Canaleta 7, Fonacier 6, Santos 6, Pena 4, Miranda 2, Yeo 2.

Quarters: 20-20, 35-45, 58-55, 79-68



LATVIA'S S. Buskevics gets away from the San Miguel-RP's Larry Fonacier during their semifinal game Saturday. AFP

Ramirez's silver best for 8-man judo squad

RAMIREZ

HO CHI MINH CITY —Southeast Asian Games gold medalist Gilbert Ramirez overwhelmed his foes to easily reach the finals before dropping a close decision to an experienced Japanese rival in the 15th Vietnam International judo tournament which ended Sunday at the Army Indoor Stadium here.

The silver medal by Ramirez came after John Baylon and Estie Gay Liwanen settled for bronze medals at the close of the 11-nation meet. The eight-man RP team actually finished with four medals counting an earlier bronze by Filipino-Japanese Tomohiko Hoshina Saturday.

Korea dominated the event with eight golds, two silvers, and four bronzes followed by Japan with a 5-1-2 gold-silver-bronze tally and host Vietnam with 4-5-23. Thailand was the only other country to win a gold, along with 2 bronzes.

The 21-year-old Ramirez easily dispatched Vietnam's Nguyen Tran Minh Nhat and Thailand's Alexander Ralli to book the first finals seat in the men's –73kg category.

Nguyen and Ralli were the same opponents Ramirez humbled en route to winning the gold in the 23rd SEA Games last year.

Ramirez then faced Takuma Sakamoto in the gold medal match and the two battled tooth and nail with the Filipino capitalizing on his massive strength and the Japanese relying on his agility and wide array of techniques.

Neither came up with an ippon (point), but Sakamoto wound up with more minor points to snatch the win.

National coach Melvin Magata said the silver was a big achievement for Ramirez.

Sakamoto praised Ramirez, saying, "He is very strong, I wonder what he does to be that strong."

Meanwhile, Baylon dropped his first match against Korea's Huh Chae Goo, but rebounded with submission victories over three Viet foes to clinch the bronze in the men's -81kg class.

Liwanen also lost in her initial match against local bet Nguyen Thi Kieu, but bounced back with triumphs over two other Viet rivals to salvage the bronze in the women's -57kg division.

UST, Faith split Adidas Streetball honors

UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS AND FAITH Academy split top honors in the Metro Manila qualifying tournament of the 2006 Adidas Streetball Challenge Sunday at the Market! Market! in Taguig City

Faith's Jet team, parading an all-American roster, bested UST's Mali, 12-9, for the boys' division crown while UST's Uraha cagebelles returned the favor by beating Faith's U-Ball, 11-8, for the girls' division title.

Starring Kirk Long, who put on a one man show in the finals, Jet stormed to a 10-6 lead with less than two minutes to go.

Long took advantage of the early foul trouble of UST big man Bryan Calantoc to score nine points, including the last two that thwarted Mali's last-ditch rally.

Long, who is being recruited by Ateneo, was also a tower of power in Jet's ousting of defending champion San Beda College, represented by Big Shirt Logo, in the semifinals.

San Beda thus failed to advance to the national finals set this weekend at the SM Mall of Asia and, with it, lost the opportunity to defend its crown in the Asian Streetball Championships set in China on Aug. 25 to 27.

Mali disposed of Ateneo de Manila's Response TR team in the other semifinal match of the event that attracted 44 boys' and 16 girls' teams.

Uraha ousted La Salle's Team Temper, 7-6, in the semifinals, while U-Ball made short work of Colf, 10-4, to earn the other finals slot in the girls' side of the tournament also supported by Globe Gentxt, Cherifer PGM 10-22, Snickers, Powerade, Viva Mineral Water, Blue Angel Alcohol and Hero Energy Drink.

Present at the awarding ceremonies were Adidas managing director Joey Singian and sports marketing manager Goody Custodio, Adidas endorsers Romel Adducul and Mike Holper of Ginebra Gin Kings, tournament director Jay Salvador and Dondell Passion from national organizers Futures Sports & Events.

MEMBERS of champion team Faith Academy and runner-up Team Mali of UST with PBA player Mike Holper, Adidas' Joey Singian and Goody Custodio, Dondell Pasion and Jay Salvador.

SPORTSWATCH

SBC whips UST for 3rd Passarelle win

SAN BEDA COLLEGE BLASTED UNIVERSITY OF SANTO TOMAS, 68-49, in a battle of early frontrunners Sunday to remain unbeaten in the 21st season of the Milo BEST Center SBP/Passerelle basketball tournament at the Xavier school gym. Micah Pe waxed hot in the second quarter, scoring 11 of his 12 points to help SBC pull away for good en route to its third straight Passerelle victory in Group B. UST suffered its first loss in three games. Ateneo de Manila also notched its third consecutive victory by crushing Notre Dame, 78-24, in Group D. Kevin Erazo eruped for 13 points to pace the Ateneans. In other Passerelle games, Marist downed Faith, 58-45, and Antipolo Lady of Lourdes School clobbered Kid's World Christian Academy, 102-50.

Inton shines in US National Target

COLORADO SPRINGS, COL. USA—PHILIPPINE CADET GIRLS DIVISION champion Ana Mariel Enrile-Inton, her father Quezon City Councilor Ariel Inton and archer Leina Bolinas attended the High Performance Program Seminar held recently at the US Olympic Training Center here. During the seminar, US archery national coach Kisik Lee advised participants to focus on process and not results. Ana Mariel, who is now a member of the National Archery Association of the United States, landed in the top 10 of the recent 122nd US National Target Championships. "It is surprising that the US team is being coached by a South Korean," said the elder Inton, chair of the ways and means committee of the National Archery Association of the Philippines.

Showdown stagfest at Roligon

THE SHOWDOWN 6 – STAG DERBY WILL BE STAGED AT ROLIGON Mega Cockpit at Sept. 2, 5 and 7 with Lakpue Drug Inc. and Thunderbird Enertone as main backers. Hosts Danny Ty and Romero Yu said screening of stags starts today with Buddy Puertas and Juancho Aguirre heading the screening committee. Participants may also bring their stags for screening at Roligon. "We are expecting to surpass last year's record of 119 entries," Ty said. This year, the total guaranteed prize is P1 million for an entry fee of P16,500 and minimum bet of P7,700. For inquiries, call 851 -2275; 833-1638 and 852- 9812 or 0917 – 8277484.

John O, King's Bakeshop come away with victorious debuts

JOHN O AND KING'S BAKESHOP scored contrasting victories Sunday at the start of the 10th Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament at the Lyceum gym in Intramuros, Manila.

Led by Marlon Legaspi and Jay Lapinid, coach Bing Victoria's John O cagers crushed Banal na Pag-aaral/AZC PC station, 102-78, while King's Bakeshop downed Spring-Tagaytay, 54-50.

Bryan Gahol, J.R. Quinahan and Eldric Ferrer paced King's with 12 points each.

Action in the eight-team tourney organized by well-known basketball talent manager Danny Espiritu continues today with Spring-Tagaytay facing John O at 7 p.m. at the Lyceum gym.

Ochoa, Pesimo top Shell chess

KARL VICTOR OCHOA HELD GILLY Jay Maximo to a draw in the final round then beat him in the tiebreak to capture the juniors division crown of the Batangas leg of the 2006 Shell National Youth Active Chess Championships at SM City in Batangas City over the weekend.

Ochoa swept his first four games before besting Jeder Landicho and Lemuel Bermas of UST to arrange a title showdown with Maximo.

Maximo hurdled Rembel Apoya and Mark Almazal to tie Ochoa heading into the final round of the seven-round Swiss system tournament for 20-years-old and under.

But Ochoa, a Bulacan State U mainstay, went for the draw to win the leg title worth P5,000 with a superior tiebreak score of 35. Maximo finished with 31.5 tiebreak points

San Sebastian's Joseph Mercado claimed third place and the last spot in the national finals.

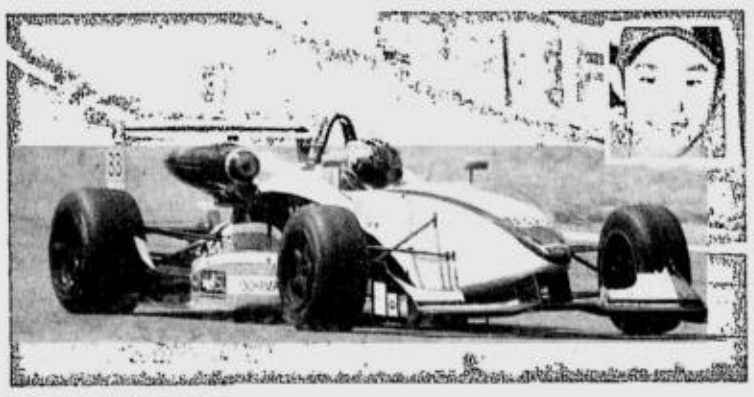
In the 14-and-under kiddies play, Daniel Pesimo, Joel Pimentel and top seed Jan Galan took the top three places and qualified to the finals slated Oct. 21-22 at SM North Edsa.

RACING

BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Kawilrwill (6), Wild Orphan (7), Gutsy (5), Dancing Slew (8), Top Quest (1)
Race 2—(Qrt/Tri)—Desert Breeze (4), Noor (2), King Hazm (8), Awesome Power (7)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Raise A Dancer (8), Golden Music (11), Handsome Tino (5), Smooth As Silk (10), Coquette (4)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Coolmore/Dancing Queen (5), Prince Valiant (2), Gigi's Gold/Blondie Baj (3), Hoy Sobra Na (4), Perfect Time (8)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Vivere (8), Lucky Joe (6), Native Land (2), Ocean Deep (3), Karma (5)
Race 6—(Super/Qrt/Tri)—White Princess (14), Hidalgo (9), Speed King (6), Carmelita (1), Powerhouse (2), Ilang Ilang Queen (4)
Race 7—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Kryptonite (3), Military Might (9), Triple Threat (2), Kay Akino (8), Baling Ganda (12)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/TRI)—Spanish Drums (8), Rivendel (14), Prime Enforcer (12), Kim Possible (9), Reporter (11), Crew Cut (6)

'Blockbuster' AF3 races set in Sentul next month



TYSON SY: Still reeling from poor form in four previous rounds.

ORGANIZERS HAVE CALLED OFF ROUNDS 10 to 12 of the Asian Formula Three Series set this month in Bogor, Indonesia, and have decided to hold six races next month at the same venue.

Eddie Peña, AF3 chair, said repair work in Bogor's 3.9-kilometer Sentul International Circuit will not be completed in time for the Aug. 19-20 races, leaving them with no option but to cancel the races and look ahead to what he called a "blockbuster weekend" next month.

The cancelled races will be held along with Rounds 13-15 on Sept. 20-24.

"It will be a hectic week but it will be great for both spectators and competitors," said Peña. "I am sure the atmosphere will be fantastic with lots of local support for the Indonesian competitors."

Repair work on the Sentul Circuit, constructed in 1997 for Formula One Racing, started last month, and Indonesian officials hope it could be finished before Aug. 14 in time for practice races. But the onset of the rainy season forced Indonesian officials to extend their timetable.

The cancellation could be a welcome break for Filipino drivers, led by Tyson Sy and Dado Peña, whose lackluster performance in wet driving conditions last month in Rounds 6-10 at the Zhuhai International Circuit in Guangdong, China, told heavily on their championship bid.

Of the four races, Sy, of Speedtech Asia, managed only 18 points and lost his grip on the overall drivers' lead to Irish teenager Ali Jackson of Aran Racing. Going into the Sentul Races, Sy has 105 points for third place, 22 behind Jackson and two points off Britain's second-running James Winslow of JA Motorsport.

Peña was worse off, garnering just eight points and sliding from third to sixth with 60 points. This enabled Briton Dillon Battistini of JAP Motorsport to move up to fourth with 94 and Indon Moreno Soe-prapto of Fastron Racing to fifth with 70.

The elder Peña noted, however, that September is still part of the rainy season in Indonesia and the Filipinos should be ready to race with the Europeans who are used to racing in wet conditions.

Davao FA, NCR lady booters shut out rivals

By Cedelf P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—DAVAO F.A. SIMPLY PICKED UP JUST ABOUT WHERE IT LEFT OFF last year.

The defending champion Davaoeñas overwhelmed Zamboanga, 10-0, at the start of the PFF National Women's Open Championships yesterday, getting five goals from seasoned midfielder Leonor Satorre at the Foundation University pitch here.

GAMES TODAY
(Foundation University football field)
8 a.m.—Zamboanga vs. Oriental Mindoro
2:30 p.m.—Negros Occ. vs. Cagayan-Misamis Oriental
Silliman University football field
8 a.m.—Negros Or. vs. Cebu
10 a.m.—Sultan Kudarat vs. Iligan
2:30 p.m.—NCR vs. Iloilo

For 90 minutes yesterday, it seemed that Davao's new American coach Shane Dasher just made the five-time national champions, who crushed Cebu, 5-0, for the 2005 crown, more precise and prolific than ever.

And Satorre, the team captain and central midfield player in Dasher's preferred 4-3-3 formation, typified Davao 's well-disciplined display, breaking the ice in the 7th minute with a blistering shot from 25 yards that found the bottom right corner.

Satorre, a former national team player, who played a prominent role in all of Davao's five successful championship drives, scored four more goals in the second half, including two in the final 10 minutes when she finished off two quick counter-attacks with clever breakaway strikes from close range.

Herlyn Mae Salmon, the standout from Davao's Under-17 team, and 2005 SEA Games campaigner, pounced on free kicks inside the box for goals in the 28th and 44th minutes, respectively. Lomalyn Fama also scored in the 53rd and 73rd minutes.

"We played really well and our opponents could not match up with our speed and strength. Our formation is designed to give two midfielders more chances to score," said Dasher, a former professional indoor soccer player in the US living in Davao for the past six months, who volunteered to take over the coaching chores in May.

The luck of the draw actually favored Davao, which is in the tournament's only three-team bracket, unlike title contender NCR FA, which found itself in the so-called "Group of Death".

But NCR was all business in its first Group B match yesterday, blanking 10-man Negros Occidental FA, 8-0, also at the FU pitch. In the other Group B match at the Silliman University football field, Cagayan de Oro-Misamis Oriental edged Iloilo, 1-0, with a late conversion from the penalty spot.

Cebu nipped Iligan, 2-1, in Group C.

BIG WINNER
Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat shows a replica of the $10,000 check he won for topping the just-concluded Kaohsiung, Taiwan leg of the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour. Luat, who arrived yesterday at the NAIA, is the third straight Filipino to win in the series after Efren "Bata" Reyes and Ramil Gallego. JESS YUSON

Dodgers rip Marlins, up win run to 9

NEW YORK—TOBY HALL AND WILSON Betemit drove in two runs each in the seventh inning to lift the Los Angeles Dodgers to a 7-3 victory over the Florida Marlins and extend their win streak to a season-high nine games on Sunday.

The victory marked the first time the Dodgers had swept the Marlins in Florida since 2000, propelling them into the chase for the NL west crown and the wild card berth.

San Diego continues to lead the NL west but the charging Dodgers have closed to within two games of the Padre and sit just one game behind the Cincinnati Reds in the wild card race.

"Right now, we're playing good baseball, and the National League West will see a new-look Dodgers when we get back on the West Coast," Dodgers manager Grady Little told MLB.com as his team prepared to return to Los Angeles for a 10-game home stand.

Trailing 3-1, the Dodgers looked ready to return home on a losing note until a seventh-inning uprising.

The comeback was sparked by a pair of bases-loaded walks by Marlins reliever Taylor Tankersley to tie the game.

Betemit then put the Dodgers in front with a two-run single and Hall completed the rally with a two-run double.

Mark Hendrickson (1-4) was effective but unspectacular, notching his first win as a Dodger after giving up three runs on six hits in six innings of work.

Scott Olsen (9-5) was tagged with the loss after giving up four runs—three earned—on eight hits in 6 1/3 innings.

In St. Louis, Juan Encarnacion and Scott Rolen belted home runs and Jeff Suppan delivered 7 1/3 effective innings as the Cardinals dumped the Milwaukee Brewers 7-1 to pick up their second straight win following an eight game slide. *Reuters*

Crack field tees off in Samsung Tour's Splendido leg today

NEWLY CROWNED world jun-golf champion Cyna Rodriguez, former senator Tito Sotto and top karter Pepon Marave head a 209-player cast seeing action in the fourth leg of the Samsung Amateur Tour starting today at the Splendido Taal Golf Club in Batangas.

BIBAT: Top entry

Southeast Asian Games teammates Mike Bibat and Jay Bayron, meanwhile, headline the men's championship cast which drew a record 42 players.

The roster also includes former world jungolf champ Wolen Superal, Tommy Manotoc, National Caddies Open standouts Jessie Balasabas and Jonel Ababa and a horde of Korean youngsters.

The 14-year-old Rodriguez, one of the country's three winners in the Junior World championships in San Diego, Calfironia, last month, guns for the ladies' Class A plum, while Sotto and Marave are entered in the men's Class A competition.

Samsung is the chief sponsor of the tournament also backed by Taylor Made, C-Lium Fibre, Microtel, Titleist, Custom Clubmakers/KZG, Sunbolt.

Sunrise Hotel in Tagaytay, the official hotel of the leg, is providing discounts for participants. Solar Sports Plus will air event highlights.

Playing today and tomorrow are the entries in three handicap brackets of ladies' and men's Class C and D. Those in men's Class A and B will join the 10 survivors of the championship class in the last two rounds.

The winners will join the champions in previous legs hosted by Royal Northwoods, Baguio Country Club and Summit Point in the finals on Nov. 7-10 at Mt. Malarayat.

TRIATHLON OUTFITTER: Triathlon Association of the Philippines president Tom Carrasco (second from left) signs the agreement making Speedo the official outfitter of the RP team to the 2006 Asian Triathlon Championship in Jiayuguan, China, with Sprint International vice president for operations Manish Mathani (third from left). Also in photo are Trap head coach Peter Gonzales and Speedo marketing manager Leni Delmendo.

Unheralded RTU rules rapid chess

Final Standings: 7.0—Rizal Technological University, Nameless; 6.5—Tagaytay C; 6.0—Stolich, Balanga City, Cagayan North, Department of Agrarian Reform; 5.5—Pampanga, Page-Jeca print, Airlift Asia Inc.

RIZAL TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, PLAYing without a titled player, bested Balanga City, 3-1, and then blanked Stolich, 4-0, to top the Rapid Open chess team tournament Sunday at the Star Mall Shopping Complex in Mandaluyong City.

The Mandaluyong-based team scored 7.0 points in the match-point system format after nine games of play, the same output of Grandmaster Nelson Mariano II's Nameless squad.

After the tiebreak was applied, RTU won the title with 27 points as against Nameless' 23.

RTU and Nameless received P40,000 each in the event sponsored by PCSO and Pagcor.

The RTU team, composed of Merben Roque, Nelson Villanueva, Edsel Montoya and Richelliu Salcedo, was trained by engineer Dennis Mejia.

Roque, who hails from Cebu, counts among his victims GMs Mark Paragua and Joey Antonio Jr. and NMs Darwin Laylo, John Paul Gomez and Arlan Cabe.

Malik Gumama, Ryan Franco and Richard Villaseran provided the victories as Nameless routed Cagayan North, 3.5-0.5, with International Master Richard Bitoon holding Mariano to a draw in the last round.

Non-master Edmundo Gatus powered Tagaytay City C to third place with 6.5 points, good for P20,000. *Marlon Bernardino, Contributor*

Little Debbie faces very tall odds in US Amateurs

DEBBIE DE VILLA VOWS TO GIVE IT HER best shot when she competes in the US Women's Amateur which fires off Monday (Tuesday in Manila) with the 36-hole qualifying stage at the Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club's Witch Hollow course in North Plains, Oregon.

The par-71, 6,416-yard layout looks daunting for the diminutive Filipina but the reigning RP Ladies Open champion remains confident of her chances, at least in the eliminations where the top 64 players after the 36-hole stroke play tournament will advance to the matchplay event.

De Villa, who became the youngest player to win the RP Ladies crown at 15, qualified for this tough event by finishing eighth in the Los Angeles eliminations last month.

She had her first practice round Sunday and admitted she's in for a tough outing.

"The course is impressive, but it is long and very intimidating," said De Villa. "It is set up like the way it was during the 2003 US Women's Open. After playing my first practice round, I knew that it will be a challenge."

Coming off a third place finish in the rain-shortened Optimist Jungolf two weeks ago, De Villa drew a late tee time of 1:58 p.m. in the company of Jennie Arseneault and Katie Miller, a pair of tall and long-hitting players from Iowa and Pennsylvania,respectively.

DEBBIE de Villa: Once in a lifetime chance to shine in US Am. JUN RAPANAN/ CONTRIBUTOR

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity, a dream come true for me. So I am going to make the most of it," said De Villa, one of the mainstays of the ICTSI golf team.

National team coach Bong Lopez, also the man at the helm of the ICTSI golf program, admitted that making it to the last 64 would be tough for De Villa, a driven player barely five-feet tall, whose chances to make the grade rest on her short game.

Adamson U board wizards show the way

ADAMSON UNIVERSITY SET THE EARLY PACE in men's play while University of Santo Tomas and Far Eastern shared the lead in the women's division of the UAAP Season 69 chess tournament that kicked off over the weekend at the University of the East Briefing Room.

Adamson nipped FEU, 2.5-1.5, in Round 1 Saturday and came back Sunday for a 4-0 shutout of Ateneo to lead the field with 6.5 points.

Defending champion University of the Philippines started slowly after drawing a bye in the first round.

The UP men nipped tournament host UE, 2.5-1.5, to find themselves at the lower half of the pack.

UE, a 3.5-0.5 winner over Ateneo Saturday, and FEU, which bounced back with a 3.5-0.5 shellacking of National last Sunday, tote identical 5.0 points to share second spot.

UST whipped National, 3-1, Saturday to be in third place. The Tigers drew a bye on Sunday.

Only National and Ateneo, with 1.5 points each, trail the defending champion Maroons.

UST had 3.5 points, the same output of FEU, after posting victories over NU and Adamson, respectively, in the first round Sunday. The other women's result saw UE defeat Ateneo, 3.5-1.5.

The Maroons, first-time chess champs in the league, banked on National Master and 2005 Southeast Asian Games silver medalist Oliver Barbosa victory over UE's Raymond Baon in Board 1 in 44 moves of a Nimzo Indian game.

SPORTS

Steinhauer snares 3rd Women's British Open

LYTHAM ST. ANNES, ENGLAND—NOW Sherri Steinhauer can say that her Women's British Open title is a major.

The 43-year-old American posted a three-stroke victory at Royal Lytham on Sunday for her third triumph in a championship that became a major in 2001, after Steinhauer had won it twice in a row.

"That is the biggest thrill for me that I've done it now as a major," Steinhauer said after finishing three strokes ahead of Cristie Kerr and Sophie Gustafson.

She used to keep quiet when people thought her triumphs here at Lytham in 1998 and Woburn a year later were majors.

"People who thought the two that I won, they thought they were a major. Now that it really is, it makes the other two that much sweeter, too," she said.

Steinhauer achieved her latest success on English soil with risk-free golf, hitting fairways and greens on a course she felt was on her side. She went to the last having gone 48 holes without a bogey since the fifth hole on Friday's second round.

Although she found a greenside bunker to finish the tournament with a bogey, Steinhauer finished at 7-under 281 for her second major title, the first being at the now discontinued Du Maurier Classic in Canada in 1992.

Steinhauer will defend the title next year at St. Andrew's as the championship goes to the venue known as the home of golf for the first time.

Having been in a slump during the past three years, Steinhauer mastered the Lytham links while Michelle Wie and Annika Sorenstam, two of the leading contenders coming into the tournament, finished way back.

Wie shot a 2-over 74 in a row to finish at 6-over 294 and has failed to break par in her last seven rounds in majors. Sorenstam, winner of last month's U.S. Open among her 10 majors, had a back nine of 44 and finished with a 79 for a 7-over 295. *AP*

STEINHAUER: Biggest thrill REUTERS

Landis raps ICU, Wada over release of B sample

WASHINGTON—FLOYD LANDIS, WHOSE Tour de France triumph was followed by a positive doping test, ripped International Cycling Union (ICU) and World Anti-Doping Agency (Wada) officials over the public release of his "B" sample in an interview with USA Today.

The newspaper posted comments Sunday on its website from the embattled US cyclist after Saturday's release of his test results, Landis saying he has been treated unfairly and cannot properly defend himself against doping accusations.

Landis tested positive, reportedly for synthetic testosterone, and was above allowable limits of testosterone in the body in a test after a dramatic stage 17 that pulled him from nearly out of contention to nearly in first place.

Landis said the media knew the result of each of his samples before he did, including the original July 27 revelation of the "A"-sample positive.

"I just got the information on the 'A' sample a day and half ago," Landis told the newspaper.

"I had to find out about the 'B' from reading it in the media."

Landis cited another shamed US hero, doping-positive 100m world-record co-holder Justin Gatlin, noting that Gatlin had known about his positive result for testosterone ratio for months before the news became public.

"I had only two days to react to mine," Landis said. "(ICU boss) Pat McQuaid said he had to release mine before the lab leaked it."

Landis defended his amazing stage 17 effort, saying the comeback was less of an oddity than the positive sample. "I put in more than 20,000 kilometers of training for the Tour. I won the Tour of California, Paris-Nice and the Tour de Georgia. I was tested eight times at the Tour (de France), four times before that stage and three times after, including three blood tests," Landis said. "Only one came back positive. *AFP*

Tiger takes Route 66 to win No. 50

GRAND BLANC, MICHIGAN—TIGER WOODS WITHSTOOD A late challenge from Jim Furyk to secure his 50th career title at the Buick Open on Sunday.

TIGER Woods celebrates his win on the 18th hole after the final round of the 2006 Buick Open golf tournament at the Warwick Hills Golf and Country Club in Grand Blanc, Michigan, on Sunday. REUTERS

Fresh from his British Open victory, Woods made it back-to-back wins after carding his fourth consecutive round of 66 to finish three shots clear of Furyk with a total of 24-under 264.

The world number one's fourth win of the season and second Buick title made him the youngest player to notch career PGA Tour victories. He eclipsed Jack Nicklaus, who did not celebrate his 50th success until he was 33.

"It's pretty cool to get to 50," the 30-year-old Woods said after achieving the mark in his 196th event. "I've been blessed and had a lot of things go my way."

"You enter a golf tournament to win. There's no reason to enter if that's not the belief that you have.

"I came here to win a golf tournament. I was in the golf tournament. Hence, I came here to win it. I was fortunate enough to get it done.

"There's plenty of times when it does not happen, but you know, your intention should be to win the championship."

Having captured 36-of-39 events when leading after three rounds, Woods' milestone win was not without drama at the Warwick Hills Golf and Country Club.

Furyk mounted a back-nine challenge with birdies on five of six holes from the 10th on the way to a bogey-free eight-under 64.

Woods began the day with two-shot cushion and maintained his advantage with a flawless front nine that included four birdies to open up a three-shot lead.

But three holes later his lead had evaporated under Furyk's charge and his only bogey of the day at the par-four 12th left both players on 21 under.

Woods, however, quickly recovered with a birdie at the 13th after a pinpoint approach left him a one-foot tap in.

The 11-times major champion followed up with another birdie on 15 to restore his two-shot lead and survived a scare on the par-three 17th when a spectator rolled an apple across the green as he attempted a long birdie putt.

With fans chanting "throw him out, throw him out," Woods would not be distracted, stepping up to the ball and draining a nervy four-footer for par.

Woods then carried his focus to the 18th, capping off his milestone win with a 10-foot birdie putt.

Woods became just the seventh player to win 50 career PGA Tour titles and remains a perfect 21-for-21 when leading by more than one shot entering the final round of a tournament. *Reuters*

Sharapova snaps Clijsters streak

MARIA Sharapova: Breakthrough AP

SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA—SECOND-seeded Maria Sharapova beat Kim Clijsters 7-5, 7-5, here Sunday, taking her first triumph in five tries over the Belgian top seed to win a $1.34-million WTA hardcourt event.

The defeat snapped a 24-match North American summer hardcourt unbeaten streak for Clijsters, the reigning US Open champion.

It was the fourth final of the year for fourth-ranked Sharapova, who won her only prior title of the year at Indian Wells in March.

"Coming into the match I knew I had to be physically and mentally ready or I was going down," Sharapova said. "So it was up to me to follow through with those sayings.

"I'm really happy that I came back and won that first tournament and got a win against someone who I never beat in competition. It was just my day. I lost to her four times, so I thought this might be my lucky one."

The Russian star, playing for the first time in three weeks, broke Clijsters in the final game to defeat Clijsters after one hour and 48 minutes and claim her 12th career title as well as a top prize of $196,900.

"To beat a player that's been in the top, that's been playing really well this year and that's No. 2 in the world is a great achievement," Sharapova said.

"But I've got to move on. This is my work to the US Open. I have another task ahead of me."

Sharapova, the 2004 Wimbledon champion, did not lose a set at the US Open warm-up event but played some tension-packed tennis to do it. She downed Swiss Patty Schnyder 7-5, 6-4 in Saturday's semi-finals.

"It's amazing to get a title and I have a few more tournaments coming up," said Sharapova. "Going into the US Open is really exciting to finally have a few matches under my belt and hopefully be healthy in one of the biggest Grand Slam tournaments of the world."

Clijsters has never won this event, losing the 2003 final to compatriot Justine Henin-Hardenne.

"Another final, especially having such a close match, you always want to go out and finish it," said Clijsters, who was stunned by China's Peng Shaui in last year's quarterfinals.

"I did better then last year. That's way I prefer to look at it." Complaining of a sore back the entire week, Clijsters felt weary after her ninth match in 12 days.

"I didn't feel my freshest out there, but I tried the best that I could," she said. "I fought and that's the only thing you can do with the way that you feel that day." *AFP*

Button cops first victory; Schu retires

BUDAPEST—BRITON JENSON BUTTON raced through the rain to seize an emotional first Formula One victory in a Hungarian Grand Prix thriller on Sunday.

BUTTON: Amazing

"Over the last 10 laps, I just didn't want the race to end," said the Honda driver, a winner at last after one of the longest waits in the sport's history. "I wanted it to go on forever, I was loving it.

"What a day. It's been amazing. Coming through from 14th place, I couldn't have done it a better way."

While the 26-year-old celebrated success at the 113th attempt, taking full advantage of others' misfortune to get a monkey off his back on a chaotic afternoon, Renault's world champion Fernando Alonso crashed out while leading.

Alonso's smile returned when Ferrari's Michael Schumacher retired three laps from the end with broken steering after banging wheels with Nick Heidfeld's BMW Sauber.

That would have left the Spaniard still 11 points clear in the championship with five races remaining but the later disqualification of Poland's Robert Kubica lifted Schumacher to eighth place and a vital point.

Alonso has 100 with Schumacher on 90. In the constructors' standings, Renault are just seven ahead of Ferrari.

Spaniard Pedro de la Rosa was second for McLaren, his first podium finish, after pole sitting team mate Kimi Raikkonen crashed out. Heidfeld was third.

Alonso's car slewed and skidded into the tyre barriers with 18 laps to go while in the lead after a breathtaking charge from 15th place on the grid in wet conditions that caught out plenty of others. *Reuters*

NBA globalization good for basketball–Stern

GUANGZHOU, CHINA—THE globalization of basketball is threatening US domination of the American-made sport, but for National Basketball Association Commissioner David Stern nothing could be better.

On the eve of the Aug. 19-Sept. 3 World Basketball Championships in Japan, Stern said the traditional US dominance will be a thing of the past—if it is not already—as more elite players appear the world over.

"Better competition can contribute to the American game... that is what is going to be good for basketball," Stern said.

"We don't think that it is good for the game if there are no elite athletes playing basketball in other places."

At this month's World Championships, a record number of non-American NBA stars will be representing their national teams, including Dirk Nowitzki of Germany, Tony Parker from France, Pau Gasol of Spain and Yao Ming from China.

"The French team that is going to appear at the World Championships is going to start five NBA players, that is a cause of competitive concern for the US team and of celebration for the NBA," said Stern, who is in Guangzhou to watch Team USA play warm-up games against China and Brazil.

China, which has already sent three players to the NBA, will be a constant provider of players for the league in the future, he said.

This was largely due to its rapidly developing economy, but also because the world's most populous nation has 300 million registered basketball players.

"I hope that by the summer of 2008 (Beijing Olympics), the Chinese team will have five NBA players," Stern said.

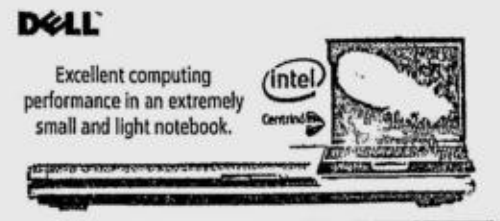
"That would be a success for the NBA, a success for Chinese basketball and a competitive issue for Team USA."

Stern, 63, has headed the NBA since 1984 and is credited with turning the league from a loss-making entity saddled with alcoholism and drug problems into one of the world's most respected.

Now his sights are clearly set on the world. "We view our mission as to grow the game of basketball. If we grow the game of basketball, the NBA and all leagues will prosper," he said.

The model of growth, he added, is to emulate World Cup football, where top players on different national teams result in the world's most watched sporting event. *AFP*

DIRK Nowitzki: German star AFP.



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BUSINESS

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Peso hits 3-month high of 51.33 to $1

Forex reserves at a record $21.16B in end-July

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PESO YESTERDAY SURGED TO A THREE-month high of 51.33 before closing at 51.43 against the dollar as the American currency faltered ahead of the crucial Federal Reserve meeting on the direction of interest rates.

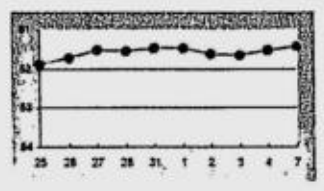
The local currency, which gained from Friday's closing of 51.52:$1, was also supported by favorable economic developments on the local front, particularly the government's over-performance on its value-added tax (VAT) collections for the first half, currency traders said.

Domestic optimism was also

PESO/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

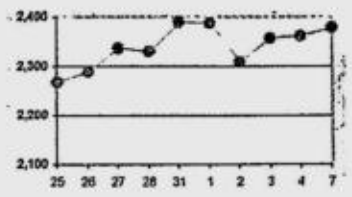


PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱51.43 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 7, 2006

¥114.60 = $1
As of 5 p.m., Aug. 7, 2006

STOCK MARKET



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares up 0.68%

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.68-PERCENT higher yesterday due to follow-through buying in index heavyweights that are expected to announce strong first half profit growth figures, dealers said.

They said, however, that turnover was thinner than usual as most investors preferred to stay on the sidelines before the U.S. Federal Reserve decides on interest rates today.

The composite index added 16.03 points to end at the day's high of 2,378.63 after

SHARES/ B2

HSBC STUDY

Pinoys retire older, less self-sufficient

By Daxim L. Lucas

FILIPINOS TEND TO RETIRE FROM THEIR jobs at a later age in their lives, especially for men, compared to their counterparts in more developed economies around the world, according to a recent international study on retirement.

At the same time, Filipinos tend to be less financially self-sufficient in their retirement years, depending more on the government or on their previous employers, said the study called "The Future of Retirement" published by UK-based banking giant HSBC.

The study found that most Filipinos—by habit—aim to retire at the age of 60. In practice, however, "men are expected to, and expect themselves to work longer relative to women."

Thus, the average retirement age for Filipino males stands at 62 while Filipino females retire, on the average, at 57 years of age.

PINOYS/ A2

IN THIS ISSUE

Mergers seen to strengthen banking system in RP /B3

RP seen to push deficit down to P80B in '06/B8

PSALM rebids Masinloc plant

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER SECTOR ASSETS AND LIABILITIES Management Corp. (PSALM) has decided to rebid the 600-megawatt (MW) Masinloc coal-fired power plant, following the termination of its asset purchase agreement with the previous winning bidder, YNN Pacific Consortium Inc.

In a statement yesterday, PSALM president Nieves Osorio said the generation facility would again be offered to interested investors through a public bidding.

However, PSALM, the agency tasked to privatize National Power Corp.'s generation and trans-

PSALM/ B3

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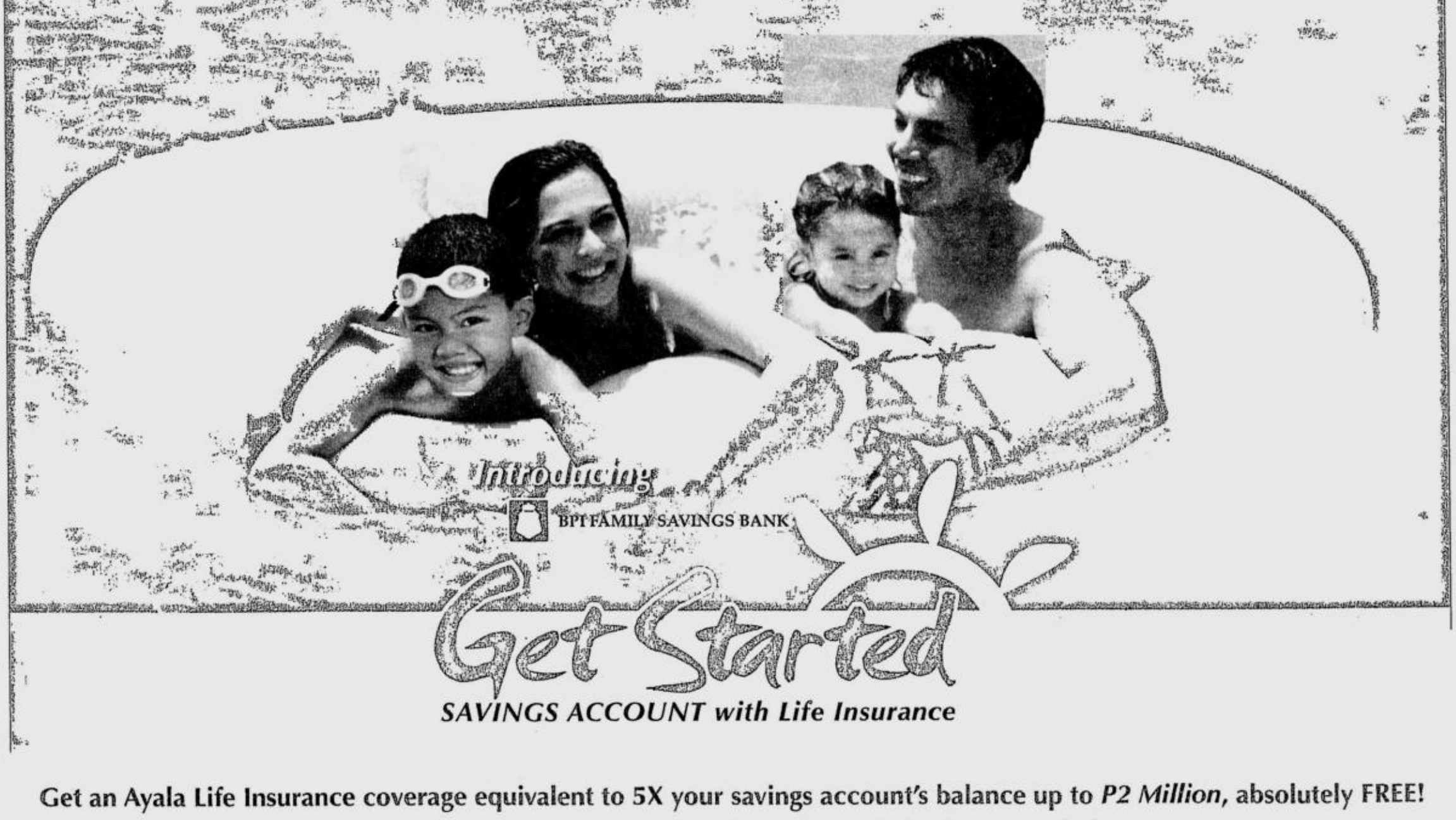

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For budding RP traders, a Swiss guide to business

Students of lesser means get sneak peek into dynamic world of business

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

IN 2002, A GROUP OF STUDENTS took out a loan from Meralco Foundation and put up their own bakery in Quiapo.

The business did well, but they eventually converted it into a computer service shop, which raked in even more revenues.

These students went wholeheartedly into their ventures armed with determination, a little money and the valuable knowledge that they gained after going through the five-day Wiwag training provided by Holcim, one of the country's leading cement manufacturers.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

Through the Education for Youth Enterprise Foundation, Holcim's implementing arm for the project, students from state colleges and universities all over the Philippines are given a sneak peek into the dynamic world of business.

Wiwag, derived from the German word for "business week," was developed in Switzerland and was designed to orient students on the interaction and impact of economic indicators such as inflation, interest rates, gross national product and wage policies on a specific business and the Philippines in general.

Wiwag was born in the 1970s out of the need to enhance the business understanding of Swiss high school students, some of whom were found to be lacking in appreciation of basic economic and business concepts.

Swiss tradition

Holcim thus established the Ernst Schmidheiny Foundation, which eventually developed the Wiwag module in cooperation with the Institute for Economic Foundation of the University of St. Gallen in Switzerland.

Following the Swiss tradition, economic concepts are brought closer to the Filipino students' consciousness through a carefully designed computer-aided training module that simulates running a small business.

The management game teaches participants to manage the company, enhance their understanding of finance, marketing and human resources, as well as the relations among these key functions.

Participants are first divided into four or five teams, each with five or six members.

They are then asked to form a management team, and determine who among them will be CEO and managers for operations, production, human resources and marketing.

In simulation mode, each team is asked to develop its own mock company and sell a specific product to a specific market.

Keeping abreast

There are also times when students are asked to take over a 10-year-old company and steer it in another direction.

To help them run their company, they are taught the factors they will have to consider to cut costs and manage operations, such as scarcity of materials and supply, fluctuation costs of raw materials, and even labor unrest.

Students are even tasked to go through the pages of major newspapers to review the days' major stories, especially in the business section, before they start their daily sessions.

This is to help the students develop the habit of keeping abreast of the latest developments in the economy to give them a better understanding of the challenges facing today's companies.

Not just for profit

Also an integral part of the training is the concept of corporate social responsibility—that businesses are not just for profit, but are valuable agents for social change, be it in environmental protection, education or health.

Helping them along in their training is a group of 53 volunteer instructors from sponsoring corporations who are there to share their knowledge and experience.

Before they teach in the program, the instructors go through their own training to learn the Wiwag module.

But during the training itself, they are expected to enrich the instructions with their own experience as line managers in their companies.

At the end of the five days, each team will be required to present its business plan before a general assembly of participatants and for validation by a panel of trainors.

Since the Wiwag was first rolled out in Tagaytay in 2002, it has reached out to 588 students from 13 state colleges and universities.

These include the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology in Iligan City, University of Southeastern Philippines in Davao City, Don Mariano Marcos Memorial State University in La Union, Bulacan State University in Bulacan and Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.

Career path

Private colleges and universities are not included to give priority to students of lesser means.

Corporate sponsors, including leading energy companies, nongovernment organizations and other foundations, help shoulder the training costs, which run to about P100,000 for 25 students.

Sponsors that have joined the campaign for business language literacy include Petron Foundation, Pilipinas Shell Foundation, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Phinma Foundation, Mariposa Foundation and STI Technologies Foundation.

Eye Foundation executive director Elaine Mapa says not all the graduates may pursue their own business, but at least all of them know enough about business to determine their career path once they leave the university.

"By seeing how a business is run, they know where they want to go when they look for work in a company," Mapa said. "And for those who have small family businesses, they can run it using what they have learned."

Holcim intends to continue with the program as part of its advocacy of educating young Filipinos on the relevance of economic concepts.

As Wiwag consultant Bruno Gmunder said: "Such awareness and knowledge of the role of economic indicators help create citizens and leaders who become positive factors in creating a more progressive society."

Turf ware

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

SUBIC TELECOMMUNICATIONS IS asking the court in Olongapo City to change its mind and issue a TRO against the SBMA and the telecommunications firm Innove.

That, admittedly, is not news. Sure it involves a turf war between two companies in this highly competitive telecommunications business. On the contrary, precisely because of cutthroat competition, such a court case is not a curiosity in the telecom sector. Court cases are the ware for hanging on to one's turf.

Alright--in the business community, court cases are an entire industry in themselves, perhaps even including the court jesters technically known as judges.

But guess who owns SubicTel. It's none other than PLDT, which also owns Smart Telecoms, the biggest mobile phone company here.

And guess who owns the other telecom firm in the case. Well, Innove happens to belong to Globe Telecoms, which is not exactly the best friend of Smart.

The days are long gone when the telecom companies, particularly Smart and Globe, would spend recklessly just to steal subscribers from each other.

The telecom war (translation: Big advertising budget) has shifted to usage. You know--they are spending billions to entice you to make more calls or text messages. For reality TV shows, for instance, like "Philippine Idol" or "Pinoy Big Brother!"

Hopefully, with the increase in their revenues coming from the increase in our usage, they can spend more money to continue cutting each other's throat.

Going back to the court case, I was just saying that SubicTel filed a motion for reconsideration at the Olongapo City court, which earlier denied SubicTel's petition for a TRO against Innove and SBMA.

SubicTel wanted the court to stop SBMA from allowing Innove to operate at the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, claiming that under its agreement with SBMA, it still has the exclusive rights over telecom service in the area.

Only last February, the SMBA granted Innove a "provisional authority" to operate at the free port by leasing out landlines for domestic and international use.

SubicTel cried foul before the court, claiming that its contract allowed it to extend the "exclusivity" if only, for instance, to be allowed to recoup its huge investments.

SubicTel invested P1 billion in the area since it was originally put up in 1994 as a joint venture among SBMA, PLDT and the U.S. firm AT&T.

Both SBMA and AT&T eventually sold out to PLDT.

In that sale, which was done during the time of SBMA Chair Felicito "Tong" Payumo, SBMA lost some P70 million of its original investment of P250 million. PLDT bought out SBMA for only P150 million.

For its part, AT&T made a killing, getting P420 million from the sale to PLDT, as against its original investment of P100 million.

Word has it that the grandparent of Innove—the Ayala group—also invested heavily in Subic during the time of former SBMA boss Francisco Licuanan, who was once an Ayala executive.

***

This cute administration had it all figured out—meaning, the funding for the massive infrastructure projects as envisioned (i.e. dreamed up) by Gloriaetta in her latest Sona.

According to Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya, a huge part of the funding will come from—who else—taxpayers. Oops, that means you and me!

And so how can this cute administration make the whole thing a bit palatable to those of us who must give up one meal a day to be able to afford the "expanded VAT" on cooking gas, electricity, and fuel?

Well, this cute administration wants the GOCCs to contribute to the infrastructure program. Really?

For the sake of the movie stars and other celebrities in Congress, GOCCs are the government corporations, and this cute administration wants them to cough up billions of pesos for the dream projects.

At least that is the press release, *este*, the "plan" *pala*. Unfortunately for us, almost all—if not all—of the GOCCs involved in infrastructure are bleeding worse than a hemophiliac walking on broken glass.

One of them, for instance, posted revenues of P1.3 billion for 2005. Guess what--it incurred losses of P2 billion. Can you believe that? Its losses were even bigger than its gross revenues!

That, ladies and gentlemen, takes a special talent. For how can a company lose more than what it can generate from sales? Only in the government!

From what I heard, this particular GOCC spends heavily on its executives. The head actually hired a whole batch of new executives, who happened to be mostly his friends.

They all got luxury vehicles, of course, with five of them getting Toyota Fortuner, three of them being issued Volvo cars (worth at least P3 million each), one with BMW (who is said to be related to a Palace bigshot), and the others settling for Honda CRV, Nissan Cefiro, and Innova.

By the way, they also get fat allowances, ranging from P100,000 to P200,000 a month, not to mention unlimited expense accounts, albeit "subject to liquidation."

Who said that jobs in the government do not pay well?

Pinoys retire older, less self-sufficient

From page B1

According to the study, people in more affluent countries have similar views on their expected retirement age, although they do tend to retire earlier at 60 for men and 56 to 57 for women.

It noted, however, that there were discrepancies between the age at which people say they want to retire, and the age at which they actually do.

Attitudes toward retirement

"This discrepancy is the result of the fact that in transitional economies people cannot usually afford to retire when they would like to," it said.

More importantly, HSBC disclosed that the general attitude toward retirement was changing worldwide, with most seeing it as an opportunity to try new things in life.

In the Philippines, however, the traditional view still prevails, with 63 percent of all respondents saying that retirement is "a time for rest."

This is higher than the global average of 40 percent who believe that rest is the prime reason for retirement.

Only 19 percent of local respondents believe that retirement is "an opportunity for a whole new chapter in life," compared with a staggering 64 percent of US respondents, and a global average of 32 percent, which believe this.

About 16 percent of Filipino respondents felt that retirement is merely "a continuation of what life was" while only 2 percent believe it to be "the beginning of the end."

Only respondents in Russia and Egypt were generally negative about retirement, while people in the Middle East and Africa were most concerned about boredom, loneliness and fear in old age.

For most "transitional economies" retirement is still seen as a luxury, a well-deserved time of rest and relaxation, according to the findings.

The survey was conducted worldwide in late 2005, and surveyed more than 21,000 adults over the age of 18. An additional 6,018 private firms were also surveyed. The local survey was conducted by AC Nielsen Philippines.

Retirement cues

Because of the Philippines' economic structure—and maybe because of social values—Filipinos tend to continue working as long as they still can.

The study found that 32 percent of all local respondents will only retire "when they are no longer able to work." By far, this is the main reason why Filipinos retire.

This is significantly higher than the global average of 25 percent and far ahead of advanced economies like the United States, where only 19 percent of respondents will work until they no longer can.

Only 26 percent of local respondents said they will retire because they have reached retirement age, while 25 percent will retire when they feel "the time is right."

In contrast, 35 percent of the global population will retire "when the time is right" and 22 percent will retire when they reach their perceived retirement age.

"[In the Philippines], ability to work, followed by age, are the different cues for retirement," the study said. "[Globally, there is] strong support for the idea that people's desire and ability to work should determine when they retire. The people surveyed see these two factors as far more relevant than age."

The financial burden

In the Philippines, the study found that respondents generally feel they should "earn their keep," when asked who should bear most of the financial cost during the retirement years.

Despite this, only 36 percent of all Filipino respondents expect to bear the financial costs themselves. This compares poorly with the average of 44 percent recorded globally.

The HSBC study also found that there was greater dependency among Filipinos on the government—both at the national and local levels—for support during their retirement years. A total of 34 percent of the respondents rely on the government, compared with only 31 percent globally.

"One of the main reasons for the increasing belief that individuals should fund their own retirement is the 'confidence gap'—the gulf between what people think governments should do and what they are confident they will do," the study said.

"Throughout the world, in both advanced and transitional economies, people recognize that governments will not be their main source of financial support in old age," it added.

The study also found that 11 percent of Filipino respondents rely on their previous employers for financial support in their retirement years—mainly through their retirement pay—compared with only 5 percent around the world.

"The view of the family's role is relatively consistent around the world," the study added. "Across the globe, people believe that they would be able to rely on their families in times of necessity."

Indeed, 19 percent of local respondents said they would rely on their families, which is close to the 20-percent average recorded worldwide.

In general, HSBC found that there was a relatively high level of awareness about the issues surrounding retirement among the Filipino middle class, especially regarding its financial aspects.

Of those surveyed, the majority were at least 20 years away from retirement age. About 80 percent said they had already done some preparations for retirement, with more young people saying that they had consulted financial professionals for their retirement planning.

In addition, most local respondents said they intend to work at least part-time during retirement to ensure mental and physical fitness, and to enable them to be financially self-sufficient.

"The Future of Retirement is the most comprehensive research investigating global attitudes toward aging, retirement and increased longevity among individuals and employees," HSBC said in a separate statement. "Governments, employers and individuals cannot afford to shy away from the enormous challenges and opportunities presented by the world's rapidly ageing population."

Shares up 0.68%

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trading off a low of 2,350.86.

Volume was 4.33 billion shares worth P867.43 million. Losers edged out gainers 47 to 42, while 45 stocks were unchanged.

"Market sentiment has been positive, given healthy earnings reports that have come out so far and expectations that there'll be more of the same in the coming days," said Astro del Castillo of First Grade Holdings.

"However, the low turnover suggests that investors are taking a breather after the recent run-up. It is just healthy for the market to consolidate for the meantime," he said.

Dealers said investors were cautious while they await the Fed meeting, with the betting even on whether it will end its series of interest rates increases.

BPI Securities said that despite bouts of correction from time to time, the market's upward trend was unchanged.

"While we maintain our medium-term target at 2,500, the market may have a rougher time reaching this index level as market volatility increases," BPI Securities told clients in a note.

"But barring any major external development, we should see the market testing higher resistances." *AFP*

Peso hits 3-month high of 51.33 to $1

From page B1

fueled by the government's rosier outlook on export earnings and overseas Filipino workers' remittances.

This developed as a weak unemployment report in the United States heightened expectations that the Fed, for the first time in 18 meetings, might keep its overnight interest rates steady at 5.25 percent on its monetary setting meeting Tuesday night (Manila time).

As such, the greenback has been sliding against regional currencies in Asia for the fourth straight week.

On the other hand, the local market cheered the country's improving economic picture, with some even believing that the local currency would soon retest the year's peak of 50.88:$1 seen in March.

But Union Bank of the Philippines president Victor Valdepenas, an economist, said the peso appeared to have found its comfort zone at the 51:$1 level. He said the local currency would not likely depreciate past 52 but neither would it appreciate past 51 for long.

Dollars sent home by OFWs through banks surged to an all-time high of $1.14 billion in May in time for the tuition payment season ahead of the new school year.

It was the highest monthly growth since June last year as OFWs likewise wired more money to take advantage of the foreign exchange rate.

This brought the five-month remittance level to a high of $4.9 billion, equivalent to a 14.8 percent annual expansion.

Also aiding the peso has been the country's healthy level of foreign exchange reserves.

The country's gross international reserves hit an all-time high of $21.16 billion in end-July as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' foreign exchange and investment earnings offset outflows from public sector debt servicing.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. yesterday said the latest GIR build-up saw a $41 million increase from the end-June level of $21.12 billion.

The GIR, consisting of the BSP's gross foreign currency holdings, gold reserves special drawing rights from multilateral institutions and foreign investments, is an indicator of a country's ability to service the foreign exchange requirements of the economy like those for importation and debt servicing.

Tetangco said the July GIR was adequate to cover about 4.3 months' worth of imports of goods and payments of services and income.

The foreign reserve build-up over the past few months was supported by proceeds from the front-loading of the government's foreign borrowings, remittances from overseas Filipino workers and, to a certain extent, foreign direct investment and portfolio inflows.

Some economists believe that to gauge the fundamental strength of an economy, the level of foreign exchange reserves was a better indicator than the exchange rate as it reflected an ability to absorb external shocks.

Mergers seen to strengthen banking system in RP

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE NEW WAVE OF MERGERS AND acquisitions in the Philippines will likely unlock more values for acquiring companies compared to gains from bank buyout deals forged at the turn of the decade, UBS Securities said.

In a report on Philippine banking strategy dated Aug. 4, UBS Securities Philippines analyst Minda Olonan said: "While benefits for the acquirers during the last consolidation wave in 1999-2000 were less than our expectations, we believe M&A could be more value-enhancing for acquirers this time around."

For as long as the acquisition price was fairly valued, Olonan said there were three major factors why buyers would likely gain more from this new M&A wave: Banks' non-performing assets are more manageable; disclosure has improved with the new accounting system consistent with International Accounting Standards, and there is greater flexibility for cost-cutting measures.

Several major bank buyout deals have happened since last year that led to the new M&A mania in the Philippine banking system: the buyout by the Henry Sy group of the Go family in third-biggest Equitable PCIBank for P10.2 billion, Bank of the Philippine Islands' purchase of Prudential Bank for P5.6 billion and Union Bank's purchase of International Exchange Bank for P13.4 billion.

GE Consumer Finance also bought out the 30-branch Keppel Monte Bank from Singapore's Keppel group for about P1.45 billion and later on agreed to purchase credit card issuer Bankard Inc. from the Yuchengcos' Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

Olonan said that aside from "value-enhancing" M&A deals, there were three other factors which could either be boon or bane to individual players' ratings within the next six to 12 months. These were the acceleration of asset disposal, emergence of loan growth drivers and ability to comply with the capital adequacy framework under Basel 2.

"The resurgence in the property market and the ongoing structural improvements in the economy have spurred the appetite of distressed asset bidders for non-performing assets," Olonan said.

PSALM rebids ...

From page B1

mission assets, has yet to set a final schedule for the auction.

"We have to make sure that favorable conditions are in place as we must have enough bidders to ensure that government will get competitive offers," she said.

"Considering the recent experience, investors need to be assured of a market for Masinloc's power output. Aside from power sales contracts, the wholesale electricity spot market, which is now operating, provides a market-driven venue through which generators can sell the electricity they produce," she added.

By the time PSALM again places the Masinloc plant on the auction block, she said the electricity bourse should have already established a "favorable track record."

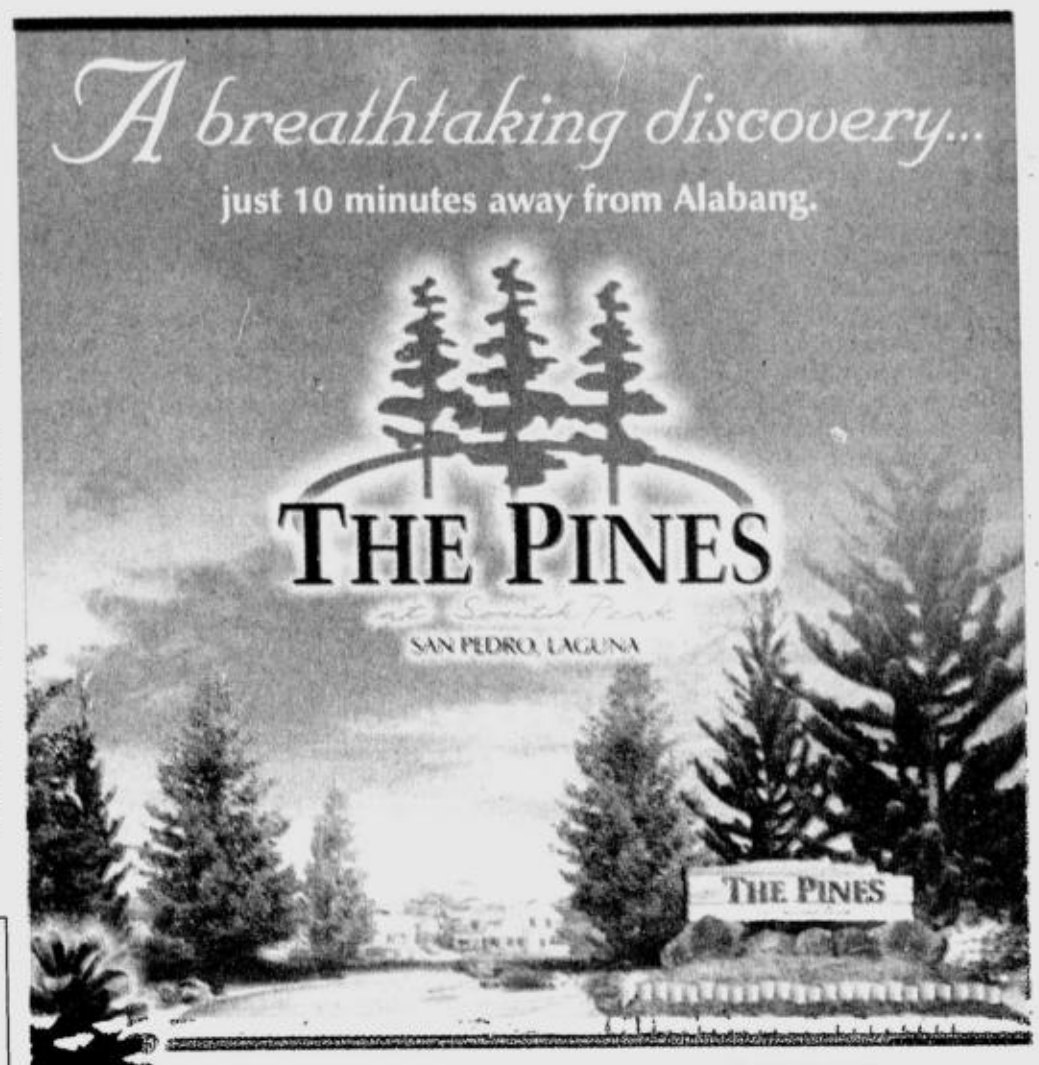
In an earlier interview, Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said that before rebidding the Masinloc plant, PSALM would first have to assess whether to auction it as a merchant plant—or a plant with no attached power supply contract—or to wait until some bilateral agreements with electricity buyers are in place.

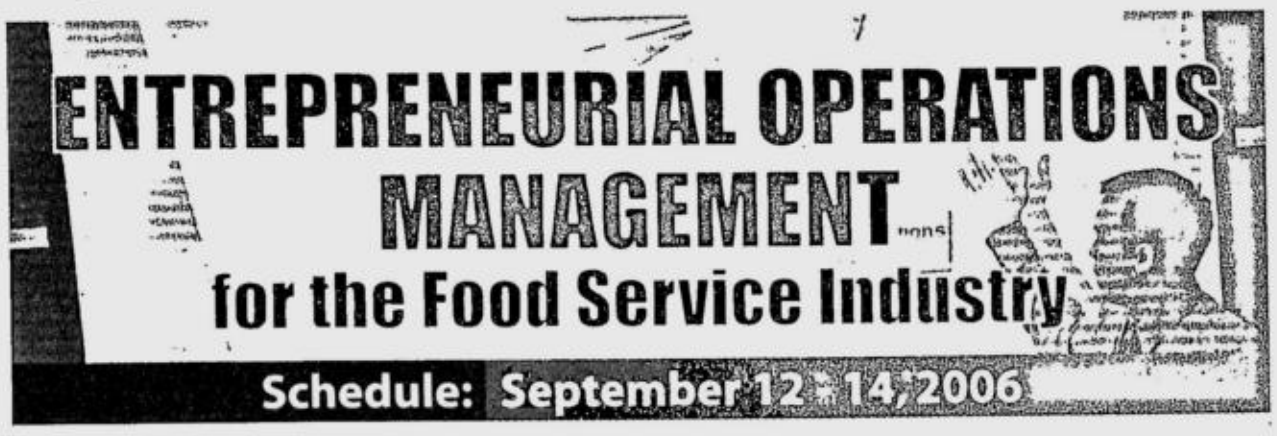
PSALM's asset purchase agreement with winning bidder YNN was formally terminated last Sunday, with the group failing to remit the $227-million down payment for the plant.

After the consortium missed the June 30 deadline for the remittance of the down payment, it was given another 30 days, or until Aug. 6, to make the payment and keep the deal alive.

The 30-day grace period was part of the provisions of the agreement, which stated that the termination of the contract would take effect 30 days after PSALM serves YNN a written notice of termination.

"This finally closes the whole transaction between PSALM and YNN," Osorio said.





Outlook for the Philippines is improving

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I RANG UP SINOPHIL TO GET THE HALF-yearly results. The operator asked who was calling and I replied "Mr. Bearbull". "SINO," she said, and I knew I was through to the right company.

I sometimes use Filipino in my newsletter, but only if it is shorter than English. For example, instead of writing Ayala Land is going down, I simply write ALI BABA.

I got annoyed with my wife after she decided to become an organ donor. I have nothing against that and I feel it is a noble action, but she is donating my organ and while I am still alive.

While we are on the subject, 25 years ago, I was the model for Smokey's footlong sausage. Now, I am working for Mr. Softy. You know when you are getting old. Everything either dries up or leaks.

If you want to join Mensa, you have to be able to answer the following nine questions correctly:

How do crazy people go through a forest? They take the psychopath.

How do you get holy water? Boil the hell out of it.

What do Eskimos get from sitting on the ice too long? Polaroids.

What do you call cheese that isn't yours? Nacho Cheese.

What do you call doue bullfighters in quicksand? Quatro sinko.

What do you get when you cross a snowman with a vampire? Frostbite.

Where you do get virgin wool from? Ugly sheep.

Why are there so many Reyes in the phonebook? Because they all have phones.

And here is the most difficult question of all:

What has four legs, is big, green, fuzzy, and if it fell out of a tree would kill you? A pool table.

* * *

I have been in this country 26 years and I have been writing for the past six years. During all of the latter, I have been influenced negatively by the political situation, two Presidents removed by People Power, attempted impeachment, attempted coups, wiretapping, corruption, scandals etc.

Finally, it dawned on me that Filipinos took it all in their stride and foreign fund managers took no notice and concentrated on the economic data. I am now doing the same.

I no longer look at any local channel on TV especially, as apart from Sen. Recto, nobody else speaks English. I no longer follow the local news, only the economic data from Gary Teves and Governor Tetangco.

I keep a close eye on Wall Street through Bloomberg and also all the data from China, India, Japan and Europe. I also watch golf, poker and Bikini Destination.

As a result of utter detachment, aided by transcendental meditation, I have become bullish on the Philippines economy. Teves and his team are delivering the taxes and reducing the budget deficit, thereby bringing down bond yields and allowing the government to complete its global financing with five months still to go.

Its sale of $750 million worth of bonds was oversubscribed 16 times and treasury bill rates and bond rates are falling like snow.

At the same time, money is being released for infrastructure, schools and hospitals and ADB and Japanese banks are lending at only 3 percent for 20 years so the government should be able to fulfill at least some of the promises made in the Sona. Funds from OFWs continue to increase and some of it is going into low and medium cost housing.

The call centers are still expanding and should continue to do so for another four years at least. Business outsourcing is a major source of growth, which makes it imperative that we improve our standard of English in schools. Another expanding industry is mining and the Philippines is believed to be sitting on more than $800 billion worth of gold, copper, nickel and silver.

Of course, income from taxation will not be forthcoming for at least five years because the foreign investors have to start mining operations and recoup all their investment before paying corporation tax but once the flow starts, it will become a flood.

The Padcal mine of Philex, which has been around for 50 years, has paid more than P8 billion in taxes and is still going strong.

In Metro Manila, regional wage boards have recommended a P25 a day increase and in Mindanao, the figure is P16 so our competitiveness has not been threatened. Inflation has been falling steadily despite the high price of crude oil and is now down to 6.5 percent. By next year, it is expected to drop to 4.5 percent.

The political situation has been quiet all year although the charade of impeaching the President still persists. Despite the additional money to be spent on school, books, roads, ports and airports, Teves still expects to cut the deficit to P125 billion this year, P63 billion next year and to eliminate it completely by 2008.

Prospects for exports later in the year are looking up and the weather has been kind to farmers, who account for 20 percent of GDP and 40 percent of the labor force.

In the next three weeks, there should be numerous company reports and most of them will show double-digit growth over a year ago.

Foreign fund managers have been positioning themselves in TEL, AC, SMPH, MERB, GLO and MBT, whose half-yearly profits rose 35 percent. PAL is expected to enter the market through Baguio Mines, a quoted company owned by Lucio Tan.

GEI is thought to be a backdoor vehicle for either RED FIVE, an Australian mining company, the RED SOX, an American baseball team or the RED BAR, a notorious haunt in Mabini.

One important stock has made a chart breakout and the fundamentals are so compelling that I told all subscribers to BUY. I expect the price to appreciate by 50 percent in a year and 100 percent in two years.

Two foreign brokers expect it to virtually double in one year, but I like to be deliberately conservative. My previous recommendations, TEL, GLO, PCOR, PAX and PX have risen by 250 percent to 900 percent.

It is not APX.

The latest number of jobs created was only 113,000, well short of the 145,000 expected and the unemployment figure rose from 4.6 percent to 4.8 percent.

Most analysts (82 percent) are expecting Bernanke to pause but inflationary pressures are increasing and I would be happier if he raise rates once more and then stated that he had finished for the next three months. The U.S. market would be happy also because there is nothing worse than uncertainty. A pause, accompanied by a statement that he is still watching the data, will leave the U.S. market in a jittery state.

With 83 percent of second-quarter results announced, profits year-on-year were up 19 percent boosted by record profits by the giant oil companies. The economy is slowing to a satisfactory 3 percent but productivity is still increasing and second-quarter profits have risen for 12 straight quarters, the longest stretch since 1950.

Developed countries are slowing down but third world countries are taking up the slack. So money should continue to flow into emerging markets like ours. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

Ayala Corp. posts 97% increase in 1st half net profit to ₱7.3B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AYALA CORP., ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S biggest conglomerates, nearly doubled its first-half net profit to P7.3 billion from P3.7 billion a year ago due to one-time gains from the sale of equity in profitable subsidiaries, INQUIRER sources said.

The sources said Ayala booked gains of about P3.5 billion in the first half from the sale of shares in subsidiaries Ayala Land Inc., Bank of the Philippine Islands and Globe Telecom Inc. to unnamed foreign investors through deals in the stock market.

In the second quarter alone, Ayala recorded capital gains of roughly P2.5 billion from the share sales. The money was expected to be used to retire some of Ayala's debt. Ayala's debt at the parent level stood at P38.5 billion in end-June, down from the end-2005 level of P44.9 billion.

The sources estimated that Ayala sold 1-2 percent of its holdings in each of its key subsidiaries in the second quarter.

INQUIRER wire reports said that for the period April to June, Ayala's net income surged 250 percent to P4.2 billion from P1.2 billion in the same period last year.

Sources said that after the share disposal, Ayala now controls 58- 59 percent of ALI , 34 percent of BPI and 34.5 percent of Globe.

In a separate statement, Ayala said strong net earnings from subsidiaries and affiliates also boosted its net income. Ayala's equity or its share in the net earnings of affiliates and subsidiaries increased by 6 percent to P6.4 billion in the first half.

Mobile phone company Globe Telecom, utilities firm Manila Water, and banking affiliate BPI posted robust earnings growth during the period. Companies under Ayala's investment arm AC Capital collectively contributed P1.6 billion in equity earnings, 8 percent lower year-on-year due to dilution gains in the first quarter of 2005.

Excluding one-time gains, AC Capital's contribution would be 63 percent higher compared to the previous year.

ALI, posted a consolidated net income of P1.9 billion in the first six months, up 4 percent versus the P1.8 billion booked in the first half of 2005. ALI's total revenues grew 9 percent to P12.8 billion.

Residential development grabbed the bulk of revenues, pitching in P6.8 billion, followed by shopping centers (P1.9 billion), corporate business (P509 million). Support businesses such as hotels, property management, construction and waterworks also contributed P2.3 billion in revenues.

BPI's net income rose 7 percent to P4.6 billion in the first semester from the previous year's P4.3 billion.

Revenues grew at the same pace, fueled by a 15-percent growth in non-interest income derived from foreign exchange and securities trading gains, rental income, asset management and trust fees.

Globe's consolidated net income in the first half grew by 37 percent to P5.8 billion with a 6-percent rise in consolidated net service revenues year on year.

MWC reported a net income in the first half of P1.2 billion, 25-percent higher than that in the same period last year. The strong performance was a result of higher water sales and customer base and the continued improvement in operating efficiency.

Highlands Prime posts 11% income growth in 1st half

LEISURE HOMES BUILDER HIGHLANDS Prime Inc. said its net income grew 11 percent to P53.6 million in the January-to-June period from P48 million in the same period last year, driven by a surge in rental income.

Rental income soared 254 percent to P53.4 million in the first half from P2 million a year ago due to the recognition of rental from various pieces of property being leased by HPI to clubs in Tagaytay Highlands, the main location for its projects.

The surge in net income was achieved despite a 43-percent decrease in gross sales in the first half to P149 million from P261 million in the same period last year. HPI sold units of its Woodridge, Horizon and Lakeview Heights subdivision lots in Tagaytay.

Other income increased 435 percent to P1.7 million in the first half from P320,000 last year due to the sale of one of its Belleview units.

During the second quarter of 2005, HPI bought 5.4 hectares of land (the Horizon's project site) from Belle Corp.

However, Belle is expected to purchase from HPI 6.6 hectares of land in Tanauan, Batangas, before the year end.

Site development for HPI's next project called The Woodridge Park is now ongoing. The construction of buildings is expected to start by the third quarter of 2006. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Benpres raises ₱17M from sale of Digitel shares

BENPRES HOLDINGS CORP., THE INVESTment firm of the Lopez family, said it booked trading profits of P16.8 million from the sale of 0.2 percent or 12.9 million shares in mobile phone operator Digitel Telecommunications Inc. last month.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Benpres said the funds would be used for "working capital." It also said it was not aware of the identity of the buyers of the shares. Benpres holds a minority interest in Digitel of less than 5 percent.

Benpres earlier said it sold 18.79 million shares of Digitel in May, representing approximately 0.3 percent of the mobile phone service provider.

The Lopez holding firm is aiming to wipe out its $400 million debt over the next 10 years through a series of asset sales and payments from dividend earnings of subsidiaries. Part of Benpres' proposal to creditors projected P15 billion in dividends from key units in power and media over a period of 10 years starting last year to repay $200 million in debts.

In 2005 alone, Benpres received P508 million in dividends from First Philippine Holdings Corp. (FPHC). Benpres also expects substantial dividends from television network ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. in 2008.

The balance of $200 million will be retired through the potential sale or swap of shares in certain subsidiaries.

Benpres expects to retire $140 million from the possible sale or swap of shares in First Philippine Infrastructure Development Corp. (FPIDC), which holds an interest in Manila North Tollways Corp.

Benpres owns 49 percent of FPIDC which, in turn, owns 67 percent of MNTC, the operator of the 80-kilometer North Luzon Expressway. Benpres' sister firm First Philippine Holdings Corp.—which owns 51 percent in FPIDC—is reportedly willing to waive its right of first refusal on any acquisition offer made to Benpres for its stake in MNTC.

Benpres is open to selling its stake in MNTC through a secondary share offering or directly to private parties.

Benpres also continues to entertain parties who wish to acquire its other investments such as telecom unit BayanTel and cable service provider Beyond Cable.

Benpres owns two-thirds of Beyond Cable and 98 percent of BayanTel. Benpres is also willing to sell its 24.5 percent stake in Rockwell Land Corp. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 4, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.8	5.8	5.6	5.6	2,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	7,600
Bank of the Phil. Islands	52.5	53.5	52.5	53	452,200
China Banking Corp.	870	870	700	700	560
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	700,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	82	82	82	82	53,700
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	37.5	38	37.5	38	213,000
Philippine National Bank	35	35.5	35	35	15,100
Phil. Savings Bank	42	42	42	42	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.5	17.5	17	17.25	39,100
Security Bank Corp.	49	49.5	48	49.5	118,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	45	45	20,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	146,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	30	30	30	3,100
Manulife Financial Corp.	1590	1590	1540	1540	260
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1930	1940	1930	1940	690
Ivantage Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	497,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	42	42.5	41.5	42	1,324,200
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44	44	43	43.5	551,500
Manila Electric Co. A	15.75	15.75	15.25	15.75	71,900
Manila Electric Co. B	25	25	25	25	235,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.5	8.9	8.5	8.8	3,889,000
Petron Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.25	4 3	1,217,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	9,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0 94	0 98	0.94	0.94	230,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	305,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	33	33	33	33	2,100
Pancake House Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	2,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.65	3.75	3.65	3.7	2,102,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65	65	64.5	65	60,900
San Miguel Corp. B	72	72.5	72	72.5	56,000
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19.25	19	19	1,293,800
Vitarich Corp.	0.205	0 205	0 2	0 205	1,620,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.6	1 62	1.6	1.6	3,078,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.42	1 42	1.42	1.42	1,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.31	0.32	24,220,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.0725	0 0725	0.0725	0.0725	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	417.5	425	417.5	425	60,160
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.56	30,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5	5	1,624,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.029	0.027	0.028	66,300,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.84	1.8	1.84	1,442,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	43,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	640,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.65	2.75	162,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.94	0.94	0.94	0.94	40,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.25	10.25	50,300
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	1,777,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.4	453,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	140,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6	6.1	6	6.1	420,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	1,000,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	2,980,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.51	0.54	0.51	0.54	860,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	3,180,000
SM Investments Corp.	216	216	216	216	75,550
South China Resources Inc.	0.98	0.98	0.98	0.98	10,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	20,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.075	0.075	0.0725	0.075	13,400,000
Vivant Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	10,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.17	0.145	0.145	8,410,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.25	13.75	13.25	13.75	3,519,600
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.33	0.33	70,000
Belle Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	6,387,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.3	0.31	0.3	0.31	980,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.14	2.16	862,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	1,550,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	750,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.041	0.041	0.038	0.038	2,900,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.34	6,604,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08	100,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	50,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.82	0.82	0.82	0.82	10,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	160,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.54	1.56	1.52	1.56	9,122,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	8,100,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.25	900,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.19	0.26	0.19	0.215	22,090,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11.25	11.25	11.25	11.25	5,200
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.45	0.45	0.43	0.44	20,480,000
SM Development Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	571,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8 2	8.1	8.2	3,286,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17	17.25	17	17.25	27,600
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	36,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.34	1.4	1.34	1.38	13,786,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1020	1040	1020	1030	20,940
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.65	3.7	3,243,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2095	2105	2050	2105	114,570
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Ionics Inc.	2	2.14	2	2.14	1,317,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	2,700,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.14	1.14	1.14	1.14	20,000
Philweb Corp.	0 031	0 031	0 03	0.031	160,800,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.5	14 5	14.5	14.5	167,500
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.35	4.35	4.35	4.35	1,127,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.42	1.42	1.4	1.4	736,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	760,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc	0.58	0 58	0.57	0.57	240,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	1200	1200	1200	1200	280
iPeople Inc.	3	3	3	3	122,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2 18	2.18	2.14	2.14	47,000
Paxys Inc.	10.75	10 75	10.5	10.75	304,300
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.1	4.2	4.05	4.05	940,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.2	4.25	4.1	4.15	609,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	110,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8	364,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2	2	2	2	2,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	8,050,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	11,280,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.025	0.023	0.025	291,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.029	0.028	0.029	175,300,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.0095	0.01	768,200,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.25	4.4	4.25	4.3	3,556,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	2,855,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	26.5	26.5	26.5	22,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.55	0.58	0.53	0.53	4,900,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.62	0.63	0.61	0.61	1,300,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.27	0.31	0.27	0.29	16,480,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.011	0.013	0.011	0.012	2,018,400,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.014	441,800,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.36	1.42	1.36	1.38	5,106,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.36	1.44	1.36	1.4	3,984,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	192,900
PREFERRED					
Ayala Corp. Pref. B	101	101	101	101	500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series K	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10 5	10 5	10 5	10.5	800
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	47,000
SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES					
SQL*Wizard Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	12,000

CURRENCIES

August 8, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.776277	1.000000	51.5730
Japan	Yen	0.006787	0.008743	0.4509
United Kingdom	Pound	1.481680	1.908700	98.4374
Hongkong	Dollar	0.099856	0.128634	6.6340
Switzerland	Franc	0.634991	0.817996	42.1865
Canada	Dollar	0.688311	0.886682	45.7289
Singapore	Dollar	0.493689	0.635970	32.7989
Australia	Dollar	0.593756	0.764877	39.4470
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.059200	2.652661	136.8057
Kuwait	Dinar	N/A	N/A	N/A
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.206990	0.266645	13.7517
Brunei	Dollar	0.492125	0.633955	32.6950
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000110	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020558	0.026483	1.3658
UAE	Dirham	0.211358	0.272272	14.0419
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.288200	66.4363
Argentina	Peso	0.253478	0.326531	16.8402
Brazil	Real	0.357946	0.461106	23.7806
Denmark	Kroner	0.134037	0.172667	8.9050
India	Rupee	0.016723	0.021542	1.1110
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.211347	0.272257	14.0411
Mexico	New Peso	0.071326	0.091882	4.7386
New Zealand	Dollar	0.484386	0.623986	32.1808
Norway	Kroner	0.126934	0.163516	8.4330
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012874	0.016584	0.8553
South Africa	Rand	0.113961	0.146804	7.5711
Korea	Won	0.000805	0.001037	0.0535
Sweden	Kroner	0.108628	0.139935	7.2169
Syria	Pound	0.014954	0.019264	0.9935
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023621	0.030428	1.5693
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000362	0.000466	0.0240

Vietnam overtakes RP in global furniture market

Philippines' market share placed at 0.54% to Vietnam's 0.78%

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—VIETNAM HAS overtaken the Philippines in the race for the global furniture market, according to Cebu Furniture Industry Foundation Inc.

A CFIF report showed that Vietnam's share of the global market has risen to 0.78 percent from 2000 to 2005, beating the Philippines' share of 0.54 percent.

China remains the world's top supplier of furniture, with a share of 11.9 percent.

Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand follow and all have a higher market share than the Philippines.

CIIF said the furniture industry urgently needed to address problems hounding the industry to stop the further drop in Philippine furniture exports.

CFIF cited several factors that contributed to the drop in furniture exports.

These include limited government support, increasing competition with Asian neighbors, dwindling supply of furniture designers, design piracy, increasing cost of primary raw materials, lack of adequate capitalization among smaller players and unwillingness to invest in plant equipment.

CFIF president Michael Basubas said the furniture industry faces an unfriendly business environment.

He noted that the anti-smuggling bills now pending before Congress contain provisions detrimental to exporters.

The Customs Brokers Act results in higher costs for exporters while the requirements imposed by the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA) for the importation of chemicals used by furniture exporters have made it difficult for the industry to operate, Basubas said.

CFIF has also asked the government to come up with regulations to ensure that materials produced locally meet international standards.

According to CFIF, the competition was becoming more stiff because neighboring countries receive substantial government support.

They are also coming up with programs to improve their design capability by attracting Filipino designers.

The Philippines furniture exports reached its peak in 2002 when total exports hit $316 million. Furniture exports dropped to $278 million in 2003 and rose again in 2004 ($294 million) and 2005 ($304 million).

In 2005, Cebu accounted for 40 percent of total furniture exports although only 20 percent of furniture companies in the country are based here.

The Cebu furniture industry employs 80,000 direct workers and 140,000 indirect workers.

To address some of the issues, the CFIF has come up with various programs to make the industry more competitive and to make Cebu the design destination in Asia.

The CFIF has also encouraged furniture exporters to come up with their own websites and use these as a marketing tool.

A report on the Philippine furniture industry conducted last year, on the other hand, came up with its own recommendations for the country to recover lost market share.

The report said the furniture industry has to target medium to high-end markets to avoid competing on price where China, Vietnam and other low cost producers have the advantage.

It also has to review its marketing channels to address the desired target markets.

The report also urged the furniture industry to develop both local and export markets to have more flexibility in their pricing for exports.

3 Chinese companies interested in mines

By Judy Quiros
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DAVAO CITY—AT LEAST THREE Chinese companies have offered to take over the operation of the mothballed North Davao Mining Corporation (NDMC) in Compostela Valley.

Edilberto Arreza, director of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau (MGB) in Southern Mindanao, said the companies have offered P51 million for the NDMC mines.

He said recently that representatives from ZTE International, RT Resources Corporation, and SITIK-UAA, have visited the NDMC mine site.

Based on government estimates, Arreza said the NDMC mine site in Maco has a reserve of 64 million metric tons (MT) of copper ore and about 800,00 MT of gold ore.

He said the area, which is suitable for open pit mining, covers about 20,000 hectares of land.

The NDMC started operations in Maco in 1981.

It was shut down when copper prices dropped to 30 cents a pound.

"The price of copper now is about $3.50 a pound. But the Chinese investors are still in the due diligence stage," Arreza said.

Aside from the three Chinese companies, Arreza said there were also about 34 other mining firms that have shown interest in the Maco mines.

The Chinese firms, meanwhile, have also expressed interest in investing in Mt. Diwata, also in Compostela Valley.

Chinese firms are on the hunt for mining sources to feed the growing demand in China, which is posting unprecedented economic growth.

Mt. Diwata was referred to as the "wild west" of the 1980s in southern Mindanao, where hundreds of people died while trying to take part in the gold rush.

It now hosts small-scale miners.

As this developed, Environment Secretary Angelo Reyes said during a recent interview here that the government was not only considering the privatization of the NDMC mine site.

Reyes said the Natural Resources Development and Mining Corporation (NRMDC) also planned to offer other mining projects to interested parties.

"We want this done because it will contribute to poverty alleviation," he said.

A VENDOR displays chairs, beds and tables made from bamboo. Furniture makers of Brgy. Boulevard Molo in Iloilo City sell them along the sidewalks for between P300 and P500 a piece.

ARNOLD ALMACEN / PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

ROLL-ON, ROLL-OFF DEVELOPMENT

Port project to connect Biliran to nautical highway set

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—THE GOVernment will soon implement a roll-on roll-off (Roro) port development project in Biliran to connect the island-province to the country's Nautical Highway.

The Roro port will be put up in Barangay Balite of Kawayan town at a cost roughly P17 million, the Philippine Information Agency in Biliran province reported.

Kawayan is one of the eight municipalities of Biliran province.

PIA-Biliran manager Flor Jackson said a consultation meeting regarding the project was held recently in Kawayan.

The meeting was attended by Kawayan Mayor Rodolfo J. Espina, some officials of the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) and the local government.

Jackson said James Gantalao, the head of the engineering services division of the PPA in the Visayas, said during the meeting that the project costing about P17.077 million would be funded by PPA Corporate Funds.

The project was set for bidding early this month and construction work was expected to start in October, Gantalao said.

With the 100-day project duration, the Roro port project is expected to be completed by January 2007, he added.

The Kawayan Roro port is part of the Eastern Nautical Highway, linking Kawayan to the provinces of Cebu, Masbate and Sorsogon as well as the island town of San Antonio in Northern Samar and Calbayog City in Samar.

Mayor Espina said the Roro port would become a gateway to employment, business and other livelihood opportunities for Biliran residents.

Linking Kawayan to the Nautical Highway will likewise shorten the travel time from Luzon to Mindanao.

Kawayan, which lies on the western side of Biliran Island, has a population of 17,507 (2000 census).

It is about 16 km north of Naval, the capital of Biliran province.

Biliran is the smallest province in Eastern Visayas, with an area of 532 sq. km.

A bridge connects Biliran to mainland Leyte, making land transportation available for those who want to travel to Luzon or Mindanao.

Transco posts P9B H1 profit

By Romulo O. Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PANGIL, LAGUNA—THE NATIONal Transmission Corporation posted a net income of P9.13 billion for the first semester of this year, an increase of P605 million from the previous year, according to a company report.

Transco corporate communications specialist Faye de Jesus said the state utility firm's financial report also showed that its net utility revenue reached P13.09 billion in the first six months, an improvement over the first semester of 2005.

The profit performance was largely attributed to increased demand, better efficiencies and lower operating expenses.

Operating expenses decreased during the period by P1.53 billion, far short of the expected P5.49 billion for January to June this year.

De Jesus also attributed Transco's financial performance to the implementation of the Energy Regulatory Commission order, which allowed Transco to collect the maximum revenues it is allowed under the law.

Transco president and chief executive officer Alan T. Ortiz said the first semester financial performance underscored the corporation's viability, especially in the light of its forthcoming privatization.

"Over the last five years, we have adopted quality management systems to make our processes more efficient," Ortiz said in a statement, "We have completed numerous capacity expansion and system reliability enhancement projects to improve our services and we have upgraded the skills of our human resources."

"We did all these in an effort to become a world-class organization and these all contributed to our consistently strong financial performance," he added.

Benguet to claim Cordillera vegetable basket tag

13 mayors work to sustain production of key products

VEGETABLES produced by the different towns of Benguet come together at the La Trinidad Trading Post. Local officials have laid out a plan to strengthen the province's hold on the vegetable market.

EV ESPIRITU / PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—Provincial officials have vowed to make Benguet the "vegetable basket" of the Cordilleras in response to President Macapagal-Arroyo's call to transform northern Luzon into the country's agribusiness quadrangle.

Vegetable industry leaders also welcomed Ms Arroyo's vision for the region, as declared in her July 24 State of the Nation Address (Sona), after learning that trade negotiations among World Trade Organization members had collapsed.

Benguet Rep. Samuel Dangwa and the province's 13 mayors said the province must sustain its vegetable production to keep up with the development in other parts of the region.

Super regions

Northern Luzon as an agribusiness quadrangle is one of the five super rgions outlined by the Ms Arroyo in her address.

During a recent meeting, the Benguet mayors said the construction of more farm-to-market roads would be crucial in increasing the farmers' production of vegetables.

Dangwa noted the role of the newly rehabilitated Halsema Highway in the supply chain that links the vegetable producing towns of La Trinidad, Tublay, Atok, Buguias, Kibungan and Mankayan to the market.

"We were challenged by [Ms Arroyo's] Sona. Producing vegetables will be our counterpart in establishing an agribusiness quadrangle," said Atok Mayor Concepcion Balao.

Balao, however, said typhoons that cause landslides remain the biggest obstacle to providing a continuous supply of vegetables.

Imported vegetables

The Benguet Farmers Federation Inc. (BFFI), meanwhile, said the collapse of the WTO talks meant that the farmers would no longer worry about the entry of imported vegetables that enjoy preferential treatment.

Data shows that in 2001 alone, the country imported P328.7 million worth of vegetables, a marked increase from the P295 million worth of imports the previous year.

In 2004, the Bureau of Plant Industry issued 720 import permits for 36.42 million kilograms of assorted vegetables.

Last year, 240 permits were issued for the importation of 8.34 million kg of vegetables.

The vegetables included potatoes, broccoli, cauliflower, celery, lettuce, carrots, garlic and onions—products which are also commonly produced in the Cordillera.

"Import quotas and reduced tariff rates on foreign vegetables will no longer be a cause of concern for us," said Jose Andiso, BFFI president.

The recent WTO ministerial conference in Davos, Switzerland failed to ratify trade liberalization measures that were supposed to be imposed on member countries, according to the WTO website.

The refusal of the United States and European countries to reduce government subsidies on agriculture caused the talks to bog down, prompting WTO director general Pascal Lamy to declare a failure of negotiations last July 18.

WTO collapse

Patricio Ananayo, Department of Agriculture agribusiness chief in the Cordillera, said the impact of the WTO trade talks collapse on the vegetable industry must be seriously studied.

The province has 24,531.32 hectares of agricultural land tilled by 43,951 families.

Last year, the province produced 650,950 metric tons of vegetables, strawberries, cutflowers, fruit trees, corn and palay.

Swedish gov't extends grant to improve BIR efficiency

By Michelle V. Remo

₱100-M assistance part of Sweden's tax program for Southeast Asia

THE SWEDISH GOVERNMENT HAS AGREED to give the Philippines a grant worth close to P100 million (13.5 million kroner) to help the Bureau of Internal Revenue improve its tax administration function.

The grant will fulfill the Swedish government project called the "Cooperation in the Field of Tax Policy and Tax Related Statistics," and will particularly help the BIR improve its capacity to generate tax-related statistics.

Improving its statistics-generation function was seen useful in improving the BIR's ability to forecast revenue as well as audit tasks.

Two Swedish government agencies Statistics Sweden and the Swedish Tax Agency—will assist the BIR in improving its statistics-gathering function.

The Department of Finance, head agency of the BIR, said the Swedish agencies have been engaged in institutional capacity building in other developing countries, mostly in Southeast Asia.

The DOF said that while the BIR would be the major beneficiary of the Swedish grant, part of the amount could also be used to help the National Statistical Coordination Board (NSCB) and the National Statistics Office (NSO) improve the delivery of their services.

The Swedish project will run from 2007 to 2009, though the grant was expected to be disbursed before the end of the year.

Commissioner Jose Mario Bunag earlier said the grant coming from the Swedish government would be one of the various financial assistance from foreign donors that the BIR had tapped to help improve its tax-collection efficiency.

He said earlier that the World Bank would give much as $13 million worth of official development assistance to the BIR. The funds would be used to train its personnel and purchase hardware and software needed to improve its taxpayers database.

Bunag also said the BIR was in the process of implementing action plans to shore up its revenue collection, given the struggle to meet its collection target for the year.

The BIR commissioner had said it intended to tap the assistance of pension fund Social Security System (SSS) in determining the exact number of employees of corporate taxpayers.

The move was aimed at plugging the suspected huge revenue leakages arising from the failure of some companies to remit the income taxes they withheld from their employees.

In the first semester of the year, the BIR's tax collection stood at P318.4 billion, falling short of its P321.2 billion target for the period.

The BIR, the biggest revenue source of the national government, is tasked with collecting P675.4 billion for the full year.

More duties on Japan firm's cargo up

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BUREAU OF CUSTOMS IS expected to levy higher duties on cargo that Japanese-firm Southern Cross Cement Corp. shipped in last year following an investigation into alleged undervaluation of goods.

Documents shown yesterday indicate that the BoC-Intelligence Enforcement Group had recommended to the BoC chief the rejection of SCCC's method of valuation that allegedly led to P24 million in forgone revenue.

The BoC-IEG's move followed a probe of a complaint lodge by the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Industry Commodity Expert, which alleged that SCCC had reported cargo and freight values that were "too low."

Bonifacio de Castro Juson, representing the office of the PCCI-ICE, filed the complaint in July 2005, which authorities estimated to have involved 46,000 metric tons of cement imports that came in starting February last year.

According to Juson, the local subsidiary of Taiheyo Cement Corp. declared that freight rates covering the shipments was $1.60 a ton, which was "too low" and "unrealistic."

Juson said data from major shipping companies indicated that during the period in question, freight rate for vessels coming in from Japan ranged at $14 to $18 per ton.

At the same time, Juson said SCCC's freight records from December 2001 to June 2004 placed rates at between $14.20 and $14.50 a ton.

In a memorandum dated July 14, 2006, BoC Acting Commissioner Napoleon L. Morales said the shipments should be reevaluated using a different valuation method.

Deputy Commissioner Celso P. Templo clarified that the recommendation for revaluation "did not state that there is convincing evidence or proof indicating clear and willful intent to commit offense or defraud the government."

Templo added that the recommendation did not warrant the filing of criminal or administrative charges against the company, but rather the collection of additional customs duty.

SCCC is expected to pay P18 million in value-added tax plus P6 million in customs taxes, which the firm "waived by declaring a lower freight cost value."

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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	Supply of Services thru Outsourcing of the following positions 1. One (1) Administrative Assistant & 1 General Clerk 2. Two (2) Budget/Financial Analysts 3. One (1) Civil / Structural Engineer, One (1) Mechanical Engineer, One (1) Electrical Engineer and One (1) Architect 4. Three (3) Laboratory Technicians
Approved Budget for the Contract	1 P 11,500 00 / month / personnel or P 138,000 00 (6 months) 2 17,272 73 / month / personnel or 207,272 76 (6 months) 3 33,000 / month / personnel or 1,564,000 00 (1 year) 4. 24,137 81 / month / personnel or 434,480 58 (6 months)
Contract Duration	Per BSP Terms of Reference

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. No. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

	Activities	Schedule
1	Issuance of Bid Documents	Aug. 01, 2006 to August 15, 2006
2	Pre-Bid Conference	August 18, 2006 – 3:00 P.M.
3	Opening of Bids	September 5, 2006 – 2:00 P.M.
4	Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003
5	Post-qualification	
6	Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P500.00 or 0.05% of the total ABC's of items to be bid out, whichever is higher to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.
Chairman

(PDI – August 8, 2006)

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Napocor to lend expertise in power to foreign utilities

By Abigail L. Ho

THE STATE-RUN NATIONAL Power Corp. is now exporting its professional services and expertise in running power plants and rural electrification, starting with an agreement with Electricite Du Laos (EDL).

Coming from the 24th Asean Ministers on Energy Meeting in Laos, where the memorandum of understanding was signed, Napocor president Cyril del Callar said he expected similar deals with other utilities in the Asean region and even in other parts of the world, such as Europe and the Americas.

But deals with its Asean neighbors were most likely to be forged, he said, considering the similarities between Napocor and the utilities there.

"Napocor has parallel experiences with them, given the similarities in our geography, culture, society and history. Exchanging expertise with them will strengthen our ties as a people and as economic partners," he said in a statement.

Under its MOU with EDL, Napocor will provide the Laos utility with professional services and expertise in electric plant engineering, operations and maintenance services, and rural electrification.

They will also cooperate on various services, including economic analysis, feasibility studies and general plant design, as well as environmental engineering services, including environmental impact studies and environmental compliance for power plants.

Other aspects of cooperation stipulated in the Napocor-EDL MOU are power plant construction, including site engineering supervision and project management; ISO certification and surveillance procedures; and watershed and dams management.

The two entities will likewise share facilities to train electric power plant operators, as well as exchange information on rural electrification, including how to reduce costs and make management more technically efficient.

AGUSAN DEL SUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Francisco, Agusan Del Sur
Tel. Nos. (085) 343-8455, 242-3280
Telefax No. (085) 839-2275

INVITATION TO BID

The Agusan del Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc., an electric cooperative with Main Office address located at San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, invites all qualified suppliers to bid for the purchase of the following items:

	ITEM	QUANTITY
1.	Psion Work about MX, 2MB RS 232	8 Units
2.	Extech Series 2500THS • Made in USA • Portable Receipt Printer that makes use of thermal paper with 3 inches width	8 Units
3.	Rechargeable Psion Battery	8 Units
4.	Work About Charger	2 Units
5.	Back up data storage	8 Units

Opening of sealed bids shall be done on August 17, 2006 at 1:30 in the afternoon in the presence of bidders' representatives, Procurement, Bids and Awards Committee, and the Internal Auditor. Bidders are required to submit corresponding 5% bid bond and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00 for the bid documents at the start of the bidding.

New Participants shall submit company profile, permits, licenses, and other documents for accreditation before the start of the bidding.

(Sgd.) URSULO E. ANUTA
Manager

(PDI – August 8 & 9, 2006)

GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM
Financial Center, Pasay City, Metro Manila 1308

PHYSICAL RESOURCES DISPOSAL COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO BID

The GOVERNMENT SERVICE INSURANCE SYSTEM invites all interested parties to submit sealed proposals for the sale of One (1) Lot Scrap metals, obsolete computers and printers, unserviceable typewriters & fax machines and other scrap materials located at the GSIS Pasay City on 'AS IS, WHERE IS' basis to be conducted on August 15, 2006 at 2:00 P.M. at the Physical Resources Lounge, Level I, Core B, New GSIS Headquarters Bldg., Pasay City.

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MIN. BID
1. One (1) lot	Scrap metal consisting of unserviceable CCTV cameras, telemitter, digital central receivers, racks, printers, consoles, keyboard, batteries, transformers, fuses, printers, monitors, ADT panel boxes, smoke detectors, generator starter, spotlights, roll up doors, steel cabinets, pellets container, exhaust shutter, rolling doors, insulators, incandescent bulbs, ballasts, fluorescent lamps, AHU, condensing units, steel box, UPS switch, rectifier cell, CCTV CPU, window type aircon, disk cartridge, magnetic reel, ADT surveillance controller, metal cabinets, fixtures, cabinets, oil filter, halogen, tracklight, roll up doors and condensing unit, staplers, perforators, electric fans, blinds, dilapidated furnitures and other scrap metals estimated at 20,000 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 213,200.00
2. One (1) lot	Obsolete / unserviceable computer equipment estimated at 2,193 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 23,377.38 or 10.66/kl
3. One (1) lot	Unserviceable 55 typewriters and 33 fax machines estimated at 990 kls.	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,900.00 or 10.00/kl
4. 28 Pcs.	Used Tires	GSIS Pasay City	P 9,100.00 or 325.00/pc

The above obsolete/unserviceable equipment and other scrap materials may be inspected at the New GSIS Headquarters, Financial Center, Pasay City during office hours. For official Bid Forms and further inquiries, please refer to the Materials Management Department, GSIS, Financial Center, Pasay City at Tel No. 891-6295.

Sealed Bids shall be accompanied by a refundable cash bid securities equivalent to 10% of the total amount of bid. Manager', cashier's or certified checks shall be accepted as cash.

The GSIS/PRDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids to waive any defect/s or informality of the bids received, to accept the bid most advantageous to the System and does not guarantee that an award will be made. The decision of the GSIS/PRDC in this regard shall be final and binding.

(SGD) ARNALDO C. CUASAY
Senior Vice-President
Administration Group

(PDI-August 6, 7 & 8, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN
Agham Road, Diliman, Quezon City

BULLETIN OF VACANT POSITIONS
(In compliance with R.A. 7041)

A. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER II - SG 27 (2 positions)
   1. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION & ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION BUREAU (PIAB) A - Item No. OMBA-GIO2-40-1998
   2. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION & ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION BUREAU (PIAB) E - Item No. OMBA-GIO2-33-1998

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: Four (4) years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related works; Training: 24 hours of relevant training. Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

B. GRAFT INVESTIGATION & PROSECUTION OFFICER I - SG 26 (3 positions)
   1. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION & ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION BUREAU (PIAB) A - Item No. OMBA-GIO1-58-1998
   2. PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION & ADMINISTRATIVE ADJUDICATION BUREAU (PIAB) B - Item No. OMBA-GIO1-119-1998
   3. PROSECUTION AND MONITORING BUREAU - Item No. OMBA-GIO1-63-1998

Education: Bachelor of Laws; Experience: Three (3) years of experience in the practice of law, counseling, investigation prosecution of cases, hearings of administrative/criminal cases, legal research or other related works; Training: 24 hours of relevant training; Eligibility: RA 1080 (BAR)

Applicants should submit within ten (10) calendar days from the date of this publication to the Human Resource Management Division at the above address, the following requirements:

1. A letter stating the position applied for;
2. Duly accomplished Personal Data Sheet (CSC Form 212);
3. 1"x1" picture (colored);
4. * Bar/Board Rating or CSC Certificate of Eligibility;
5. * Transcript of Records;
6. * Certificates of Seminars/Training Attended;
7. * Service Records or Certificates from previous/present employers stating the positions assumed and corresponding actual duties and responsibilities (if applicable);
8. * Performance Appraisal Reports for the last two rating periods (for current government employees only);
9. Statement duly signed by the applicant as to any relative(s) within the fourth degree of consanguinity or affinity, currently employed with the Office of the Ombudsman.

* Where photocopies are filed, the documents must be certified as true copies by the proper authorities or the applicant may present the originals to the Human Resource Management Officer for comparison with the photocopies.

ERC approves 2 sales deals

AFTER MORE THAN TWO YEARS, THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has finally approved the National Transmission Corp.'s (Transco) sub-transmission asset sale contracts with Cabanatuan Electric Corp. (Celcor) and Angeles Electric Corp.

The two contracts, worth a combined P27.3 million, involved 27 circuit-kilometers of sub-transmission lines and 343 structures within the franchise areas of the two distribution utilities.

Celcor's contract is worth P11.16 million, while that of AEC is worth P16.17 million.

The ERC's approval of the two purchase agreements will enable Transco to transfer the ownership and maintenance of the 8.28-circuit-kilometer Cabanatuan-Celcor 69-kilovolt (kV) line in Nueva Ecija to Celcor and the 18.5-circuit-kilometer Mexico-Angeles 69-kV line in Pampanga to AEC.

These two approved sale contracts were just the second and third of 27 agreements that Transco had signed with various power distributors nationwide since January 2004.

Abigail L. Ho

GOINGS-ON

Lecture on IPR violations set

THE DE LA SALLE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOLS Graduate School of Business, in cooperation with the Embassy of the United States of America, will hold a lecture on "Economic and Social Costs of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Violations" from 6-8 p.m. today at the DLSPS GSB RCBC Plaza Campus, RCBC Plaza, Makati City.

The speaker is Timothy Trainer, Founder and President of the Global Intellectual Property Strategy Center (GIPSC) in Washington, DC.

The lecture is open to the public. Interested participants may contact vice dean Tristan H. Macapanpan at 753-4618 or email macapanpant@dlsu.edu.ph.

With deep sorrow, we wish to announce that
Our dearest Mother

TAN (ONG) CHIONG GIOK

1920-2006
Odiongan, Romblon

entered in Glory with her Lord & Savior on August 4, 2006 at the age of 86.

Left to mourn her loss but eternally grateful to God for a well-lived life are her children **Ernesto (Boyie) & Arlyn, Joe & Divina (Nene), Roberto (Nonoy) & Kim Si, Leon (Nono) & Teresita (Tess),** grandchildren & great-grandchildren

We wish to inform the relatives and friends that her body lies in state at La Funeraria Paz, 143 G. Araneta Avenue corner Kaliraya St., Quezon City.

Her remains will be transferred to Odiongan, Romblon in the afternoon of August 11, 2006.

Interment will be on August 16, 2006 at Odiongan, Romblon at 9:00 a.m.

In Loving Memory
on the **26TH DEATH ANNIVERSARY**
August 8, 2006

MAYOR DOMINGO B. FLORES

Macabebe, Pampanga

Holy Masses will be offered at the following:

Presentation Parish ..... 6:00 AM
Batasan, Macabebe, Pampanga

San Rafael Parish ..... 6:00 AM
San Rafael, Macabebe, Pampanga

St. Nicholas de Tolentino Parish ..... 6:00 AM
Neptune St., Congressional Subd.
Project 8, Quezon City

St. Nicholas de Tolentino Parish ..... 6:00 PM
Macabebe, Pampanga

St. Michael the Archangel Parish ..... 6:00 AM
Masantol, Pampanga

St. Joseph the Worker ..... 6:00 AM
Balintawak, Quezon City

Sta. Quiteria St. Francis Parish ..... 6:00 AM
Sta. Quiteria, Caloocan City

Dear readers please pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

Our Dearly Beloved

LUISA PAGULAYAN ARAO

of Quezon City and Tuguegarao City, Cagayan
Peacefully joined our Lord on August 6, 2006 at the age of 79.

Her siblings **Charing, Ano** and **Domie**; children **Rommel & Jean, Imelda & Rene** and **Lloyd**; grandchildren **Celine, Bernise, Vinnie** and **Ciara**; and all her relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the family home at 131 Scout Lozano Street, Diliman, Quezon City from August 6, 2006 and will be flown to Tuguegarao City, Cagayan on August 9, 2006. Interment will be announced later.

"I have put a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith..."
2 Timothy 4:7-8

ATTY. ARNULFO ERICTA BAUA

May 18, 1946 – August 5, 2006

Peacefully joined our Lord and his beloved parents **Dr. Domingo L. Baua** and **Encarnacion G. Ericta**.

His wife **Liza Vitug Maguerza**; his children **Ciel, Dino** and **Nikki** and grandson **Gaby**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Nieva Marie & Joeben Laraya, Celia & Bernie Duldulao, Dely & Mike Patolot, Hedy & George Buktaw**, nieces, nephews & relatives, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Montserrat Chapel of Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Avenue, Parañaque.

Interment will be on Thursday, August 10, 2006 at the **Manila Memorial Park** after the **8:00 a.m.** Mass at the Montserrat Chapel of Loyola Memorial Park, SucatAvenue, Parañaque.

Message of Thanks

The family: wife **Diane**; children **Tiana, Miguel, Megan, Tasha** and **Bam Bam**; mother **Virginia**; sisters **Melinda, Anne, Isa**

of the late

JAIME BORBON MENDOZA

who joined his Creator
on June 29, 2006

wish to express their deepest thanks to all those who have thoughtfully offered Masses and Novenas, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, paid their last respects and given comfort to the family in many different ways.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

WILFRIDO "WILLY" AMPIL CRUCILLO

July 29, 1941 - August 1, 2006

wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to all relatives, friends, and all those who visited and kept vigil, offered Masses and prayers, sent condolences, and flowers, joined the funeral rites and who, in countless ways, helped and comforted us in our moment of grief.

CLASSIFIEDS

P114-M in CBA benefits awarded

MORE THAN 1,300 WORKERS benefited from a total of 114 million pesos collective bargaining economic package with the resolution or settlement of their labor disputes during the first semester of the year, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) said. In a report to Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion, the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB) also said that for the period January to June 2006, over 1,000 workers received P30 million in separation benefits. The NCMB report revealed that it received only a total of 176 notices of strike/lockout in the first six months of the year, which is 30 percent lower than the 253 notices filed during the same period last year. The number of workers involved in this year's notices of strike/lockout was also conspicuously lower, 37,139 compared to almost 45,000 workers involved in last year's strike notices. The strike prevention rate during the period was 97 percent, slightly higher than the 96 percent registered last year. At the end of June, only 62 notices of strike/lockout remain subject of on-going conciliation.

Strikes down in first 6 months of 2006

A MORE STABLE AND HARMONIOUS industrial relations climate is noted from January to June this year as a significant decline in the number of strikes is posted during the period compared to the figures registered during the same period last year, the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) today said. From the 13 strikes or work stoppages posted in the first six months of 2005, the number tapered off to nine this year for a 31 percent decrease, Labor and Employment Secretary Arturo D. Brion said citing reports from the National Conciliation and Mediation Board (NCMB). The NCMB disclosed that the number of workers affected by this year's labor strikes is even more remarkable with only 949 workers involved compared to almost 5,000 during the previous year or an 80% drop. Mondays lost is likewise lower at 26,217 compared to 39,000 during the same period last year. This year's strikes according to NCMB were confined only in three regions, namely: the National Capital Region (NCR) with 5, Region IV-A (Calabarzon) with 3, and Region 3 (Central Luzon) with only 1. Brion said that the peaceful labor front is a strong indication of a healthy cooperation between labor and management.

SGT. CHRISTIAN B. WILLIAMS, USM

Died in the grace of our Lord
on July 29,2006 at the age of 27.

A beloved son and a dedicated marine who died in IRAQ in the line of duty. His bereaved parents **Jack** and **Lisa**. His siblings **Neliza, Lyn** and **Vince**, nephews **Logan** and **JJ**, grandma **Zeny**, uncles **Joy** and **Vhen** and the entire **Williams** family request the pious readers to join them in their prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

More Classified Ads on Page B6

Government Service Insurance System
Office of the Ombudsman
Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Agusan Del Sur Electric Cooperative
Billy Dela Torre
Manila Watch
Leoncio Nadal

ARTEMIO "Ambolito" P.B. MARCELO, JR.

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on August 6, 2006.

He is survived by his wife **Maria Paz**; children **Carrie & Din, Jetty, Patok**, and **Joyce**; grandchild **Nicole**; mother **Trining**; brothers, sisters, and in-laws. They and other relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Concepcion Chapel, Concepcion, Baliwag, Bulacan.

Interment at the **Marcelo Family Mausoleum** will be on August 10, 2006 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

BUSINESS

RP seen to push deficit down to P80B in '06

Merrill Lynch says debt paper highly recommended

By Michelle V. Remo

INVESTMENT BANK MERRILL LYNCH IS upbeat on the Philippines, projecting that the government will be able to trim its budget deficit to only P80 billion this year, while the country's debt paper continues to maintain an "overweight" recommendation.

"Overweight" is a recommendation for investors to buy bonds issued by the country concerned.

The bank's expected deficit is 36 percent lower than the P125-billion ceiling set under the government's fiscal program. The projection was based on the government's fiscal performance in the first half, which Merrill Lynch found encouraging.

An P80-billion budget deficit for the full year will be equivalent to only 1.3 percent of the country's expected gross domestic product compared with the government's goal of 2.1 percent.

"In our view, the fundamental picture will improve in the period ahead, especially as the fiscal performance is bound to be better than expected," the bank said in its latest assessment of the Philippine economy.

In the first semester, the deficit stood at only P31.5 billion. This was 65 percent lower than the P90.4-billion ceiling set for the six-month period. The over-performance was attributed both to higher-than-expected revenue collection and tight spending.

Merrill Lynch, however, noted that restrained spending contributed more in the first-half fiscal performance. While it would have a positive impact on the country's fiscal standing, the same might dampen growth in the medium term.

The tightness in spending was brought about by the failure of Congress to pass the proposed national budget for this year, forcing the government to operate on last year's reenacted budget.

Merrill Lynch painted a rosy picture on the the fiscal program for next year—showing a further reduction of the deficit to only P63 billion. But it added that this would depend on the government's ability to address problems in tax collection.

The bank also noted the attractiveness of Philippine debt instruments as marked by investors' strong appetite for the country's recent flotation of $750 million global bonds, which was highly oversubscribed.

Fish sector said to post higher yield in 2nd qtr

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE COUNTRY'S FISHERY SECTOR IS LIKEly to have grown between 7 to 8 percent in the second quarter due to the reported higher yield in the production of seaweeds, milkfish and tilapia (St. Peter's fish) a government official said.

The fishery sector, which accounted for 24.37 percent of total agricultural production, "is on track and within the full-year target of 8 percent" said Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources Director Malcolm Sarmiento yesterday said.

"This could be attributed to the higher aquaculture production that registered a 9 to 10 percent growth rate in the second quarter," Sarmiento said at the sidelines of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission Scientific Committee meeting held in Makati City.

Aquaculture is fish farming in fresh water that usually uses fish cages.

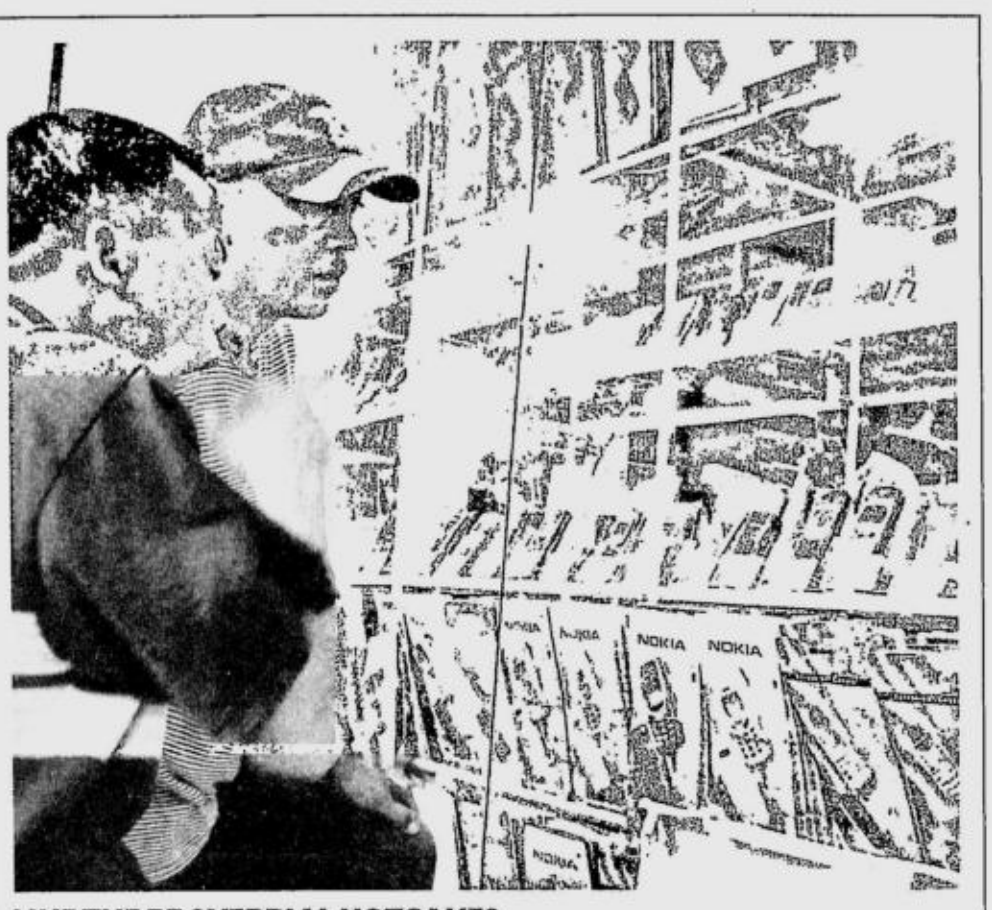
He noted that this could be traced to bigger seaweed output, which constituted about 70 percent of total aquaculture production.

He said that there is a gain in seaweed production in Zamboanga del Sur as good weather conditions favored the growth of seaweeds in Zamboanga Sibugay.

Sarmiento explained that the use of improved tilapia and bangus varieties, specifically the genetically enhanced tilapia which can be harvested in three months time, will make frequent harvests possible.

Bangus hatcheries are also being set up in strategic locations in the country.

Other strategic interventions of the government, which allowed the sector to post better results, include the provision of bulk-handling facilities and the opening of the Strong Republic Nautical Highway—also known as the Roll-On, Roll-Off Food Highway—which provides an alternate route for the flow of agricultural products. This has facilitated the trade of agriculture products in Visayas and Mindanao.



LIKE THE PROVERBIAL HOTCAKES
An electronics store in Iloilo City displays second hand cellular phones that appear to be selling like hotcakes. The price of a used mobile phone is usually half of what the original unit costs. A week's guarantee comes with the purchase of a used phone. ARNOLD ALMACEN / PDI VISAYAS BUREAU

Gov't urged to reconsider planned phaseout of gas

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A GROUP OF LOCAL AUTOMAKers yesterday warned against the possible phaseout of conventional gasoline and diesel amid a drive to promote the use of biofuels, saying certain types of vehicles require pure petroleum to run.

Elizabeth H. Lee, president of the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc., said that while the group supported the government's campaign for the use of alternative fuels, authorities should realize that biofuels should not be mandated for all pumps.

"Not all engines are compatible with these fuels such as carbureted engines," Lee said. "In such a case, conventional fuel should still remain available to supply the fuel requirement of these noncompatible engines."

The Campi chief added that the specifications of biofuels must be in accordance with the World-Wide Fuel Charter (WWFC) which was developed by global engine and vehicle manufacturers.

"Under the current Fuel Charter, the recommended maximum blend of ethanol in gasoline is 10 percent and 5 percent for biodiesel (referring to Fatty Acid Methyl Esters)," Lee said.

She also said oil companies should be the ones to mix blended fuels to ensure fuel quality compliance and that the government must set standards for blending, handling, distribution and quality monitoring.

Regarding the biofuel bills pending in both chambers of Congress, Lee said Campi was urging lawmakers to take into account the capacity of manufacturers to supply the needed additives for biofuels.

The official said that under existing policy on warranty of motor vehicles, any problem that may be caused or proven to be attributable to the use of fuel or additives not recommended or approved by the manufacturer would void the warranty of that vehicle.

DOF seeks to lift VAT exemption of ecozone locators

A PROPOSAL TO LIFT THE AUTOMATic value-added tax exemption of exporters located in economic zones has been pushed in the Senate.

Should the proposed lifting of the incentive be implemented, exporters in economic zones will therefore be required to pay VAT every tax period. The locators will have to refund the amount after their claims have been verified.

According to an official from the Department of Finance, which assists the Senate committee on ways and means in drafting the bill on rationalization of fiscal incentives, removing the automatic VAT exemption would protect government from spurious claims of VAT exemption.

Verifying the identities of exporters claiming VAT exemptions would help trim down foregone revenues arising from the granting of incentives to illigitimate businesses, the official said.

The proposal came amid suspicion that even smugglers are able to claim exemption from the VAT imposed on their imports.

Lifting the automatic VAT exemption currently enjoyed by exporters in economic zones is a proposal embodied in the fiscal incentives rationalization bill drafted by the Senate committee on ways and means and authored by Sen. Ralph Recto, committee chair.

Under the draft bill, only businesses that engage in export and selected mining firms would be entitled to fiscal incentives, including duty exemption and tax cuts. Mining firms to be granted incentives will only be those situated in the country's 30 poorest provinces and which either invest at least P500 million or create 200 jobs.

The bill aims to repeal the numerous laws that separately grant incentives to various sectors. The annual Investment Prioities Plan, under which the government chooses the industries that will be given fiscal incentives, will therefore have to be abolished.

The incentives to be given to exporters include duty exemption on importation of raw materials and capital equipment, extended nolco (net operating loss carryover), accelerated depreciation, and a reduced income tax rate of 15 percent compared with the regular 35 percent.

Michelle V. Remo

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*As awarded by CAGI

www.mazda.com.ph

IN THIS ISSUE

■ **A great notion** born 25 years ago /C4

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

sms feedback: Inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) **or email us at** lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** • TUESDAY **FITNESS** • WEDNESDAY **2BU** • THURSDAY **FOOD** • FRIDAY **FASHION & BEAUTY**

When you need more than just a lullaby

Sleep or lack of it can lead to serious injury, even death

Text by Linda B. Bolido
Photos by Roger Carpio

TOSSING AND TURNING IN bed may not seem alarming if it only happens occasionally. But if it becomes more the story of your life rather than an occasional inconvenience, then may be it is time to see a sleep expert.

Just don't expect the expert to sing lullabies to put you to sleep. Believe it or not, sleep has become a growing medical specialty, as "sleeping like a log" and "the sleep of the just" are conditions that are increasingly becoming unfamiliar to many people.

Dr. Michael Alexius A. Sarte, head of the Center for Sleep Disorders of The Medical City in Pasig City, says there are about 84 disorders that require expert attention. Even the problem of loud snoring, long regarded as no more than an annoyance and/or inconvenience, is now getting serious medical attention.

TEMPUR mattresses and pillows use material originally developed to help astronauts cope with the pressure of overcoming Earth's gravitational pull.

Sleep means health

The growing concern about sleep disorders stems from the increasing realization that sleep promotes health and well-being. Moreover, sleep or lack of it can lead to injury even death. Insufficient sleep can lead to irritability, lack of concentration and serious accidents that may result in major injuries, even death.

Some sleep problems can be fatal by themselves. Consider crib deaths in infants and "*bangungot*."

Though Sarte says more and more Filipinos are seeking relief for sleep disorders—his office sees five to seven patients a day usually for insomnia and snoring—a lot remains to be done in terms of educating the public not to take sleep problems lightly.

Insomnia or inability to sleep, of course, is a problem that is generally recognized as in need of medical attention. But Sarte says people should also see an expert if they are aware of making unusual movements and/or sounds during sleep, and feel sleepy during daytime.

Among Filipinos, Sarte says the most common sleep problems, aside from insomnia, are snoring and apnea (defined in the medical dictionary as "a temporary stopping of breathing, usually caused by an excess accumulation of oxygen or insufficient amount of carbon dioxide in the brain").

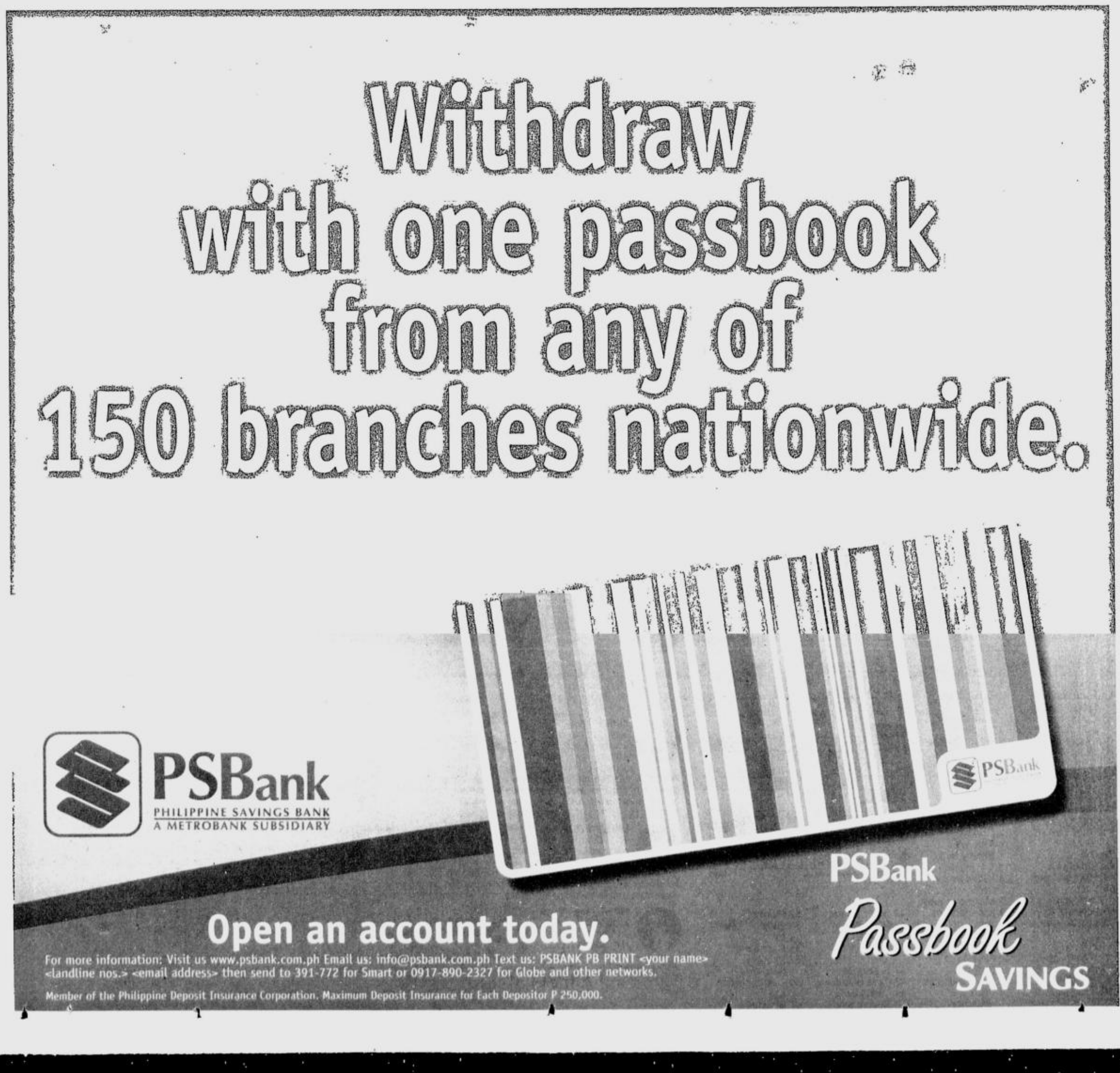
Sleep apnea is more common among children and men while more women suffer from insomnia.

Causes

Sarte says the problems, particularly among adults, are often caused by lifestyle, genetics, body anatomy and stress. These factors should alert people to the possibility that they can suffer from sleep disorders.

The physician says while some disorders may need no more than counseling, certain problems may require medical intervention, even surgery. He says the first step toward dealing with the problem is awareness. Peo-

WHEN/ C4



FOXTROT BY BILL AMEND

A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

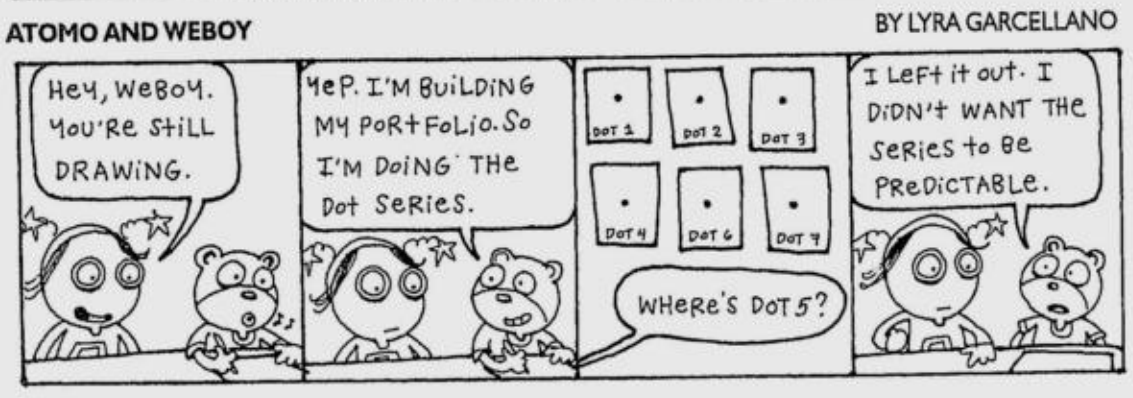
BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

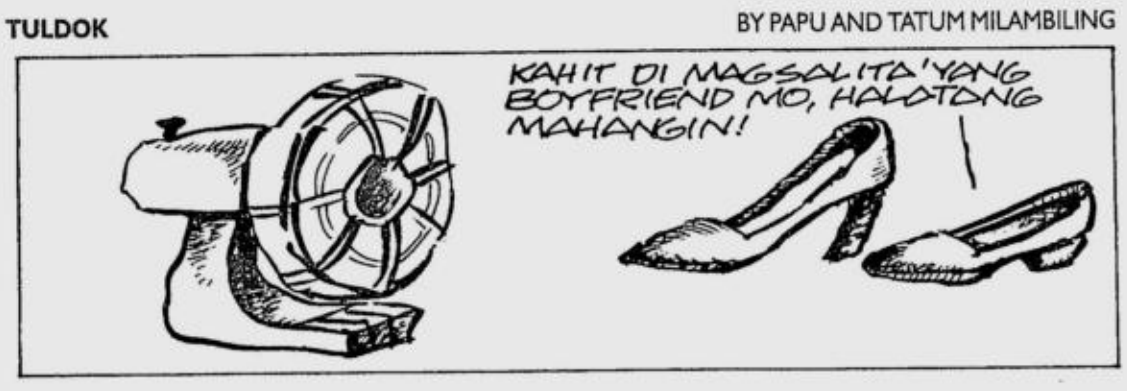


DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA

MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

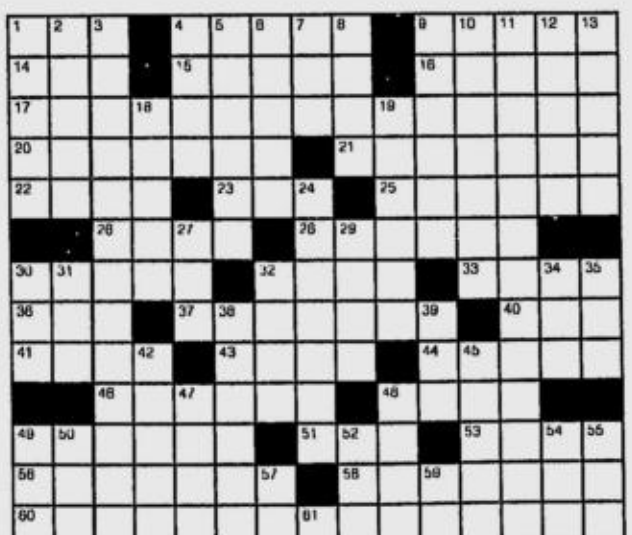


BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 Ship deserter
4 Shallow-draft boat
9 Outmoded
14 Poem of tribute
15 Edmonton NHL-er
16 Pasty colored
17 Three big things
20 Plane curve
21 Suburb of Atlanta
22 Prophet
23 Begley and Wynn
25 Like metamorphic rock
26 Private sch.
28 Tulip tree
30 Weary sounds
32 Remedy
33 Dirt
36 Play about Capote
37 Joyce and Val
40 Keyboard key
41 Ooze
43 Ghostly greetings
44 Madeline and Louis
46 Configuration
48 Author of "The Immoralist"
49 Scolded
51 "Xanadu" band
53 Sunoco rival
56 Does road work
58 Reception option
60 Three big things
62 Direct
63 Out of port
64 SSW opposite
65 Some chalcedonies
66 Polar explorer
67 Aus. neighbor

DOWN
1 Graduation wear
2 An Astaire
3 Three big things
4 Mock turtle, e.g.
5 Smooched
6 Fibber's admission
7 Wetland
8 Mr. Flintstone
9 French mathematician
10 Up to
11 Three big things
12 South Korean capital
13 Doorway
18 Tree with papery bark
19 "__ Fidelis"
24 Italian frozen treat
27 Make a request
29 Mineral veins
30 Rds.
31 Fury
32 Block up
34 Fleming or McEwan
35 Wt. increments
38 Footnote reference
39 Snow runner
42 Propelled a bicycle
45 Hersey's bell town
47 Breaks off
48 Type of tortoise
49 Tasteless
50 Seven: pref.
52 Plenty of
54 Judy of "Laugh-In"
55 Command
57 Laundry detergent
59 Online auction site
61 Shoshone



By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

8/8/06

Monday's Puzzle Solved

D	A	L	Y		L	A	M	A		P	E	T	E	R
A	B	O	O		A	P	E	S		E	A	R	L	E
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S	T	A	R	T	S		I	S	A	K		C	A	T
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S	E	A	S	I	D	E		U	S	D	A			
H	A	L	O	S		L	E	N	O		P	A	P	A
A	C	T	V		K	E	V	I	N		I	M	A	M
W	H	O	A		I	R	A	Q		A	T	A	R	I
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8/8/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're extremely creative and multitalented. Your challenge is figuring out what you want to be when you grow up. Whatever you do—you embrace it completely and totally. You're hardworking, responsible and reliable. However, you need constant stimulation and diversity in your life. The year ahead will be unusually social, pleasant and conducive to happy relationships.
Birthdate of: Dustin Hoffman, actor; Donny Most, actor; Keith Carradine, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This can be a marvelous day at work. You will get a tremendous amount done because others are willing to support you now. You have the resources, supplies and assistance that you need. Yippee!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a wonderful day for a party. It's also a wonderful day for romance, creative activities and playful times with children. Get out and enjoy yourself!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Entertain friends at home. If you're working on redecorating or renovating projects, all will go extremely well today. People are very helpful to you. Accept whatever assistance is offered.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You feel unusually optimistic and enthusiastic about something today. This is an excellent day to sign contracts or negotiate deals. Conversations with siblings are very positive.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Business and commerce are unusually favored today. This is also an excellent day for shopping. Trust your moneymaking ideas. Ka-ching!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're enthusiastic, positive and raring to go today. You feel like a winner. Physical and outdoor activities will definitely appeal to you today.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Do whatever you can to improve the situation of those who are less fortunate than you. You'll feel much satisfaction from this. (The opportunity to practice compassion is its own reward.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Group interaction relating to clubs and organizations, and talking to friends are all things that will promote a positive feeling within you today. "All for one, and one for all!"

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Trust your ambitious urges today. This is the perfect day to talk to parents, bosses, teachers and VIPs. Your enthusiasm will sell your ideas. (A great product just sells itself.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Make plans to increase your education, get further training or travel somewhere. Publishing, the media, medicine and the law are all areas that can offer you wonderful opportunities to expand your world.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Be on the lookout for ways to increase your wealth through gifts and favors today. Goodies can definitely come your way now. Keep your pockets open!

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): What a wonderful day to schmooze with friends, partners and members of the general public! Get out and enjoy yourself. People are glad to see you.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

6		5				9		1
	1	3				5	4	
	4			9			6	
			9		7			
	3	6				2	9	
				2	5			
	5			4			3	
	8	4				6	7	
3		2				8		4

Difficulty Level ★★

8/08

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	4	3	2	8	6	7	1	9
7	1	9	5	3	4	8	6	2
6	8	2	9	1	7	5	4	3
3	7	1	6	4	2	9	5	8
4	9	5	1	7	8	2	3	6
8	2	6	3	9	5	4	7	1
2	3	8	4	5	1	6	9	7
9	6	4	7	2	3	1	8	5
1	5	7	8	6	9	3	2	4

Difficulty Level ★

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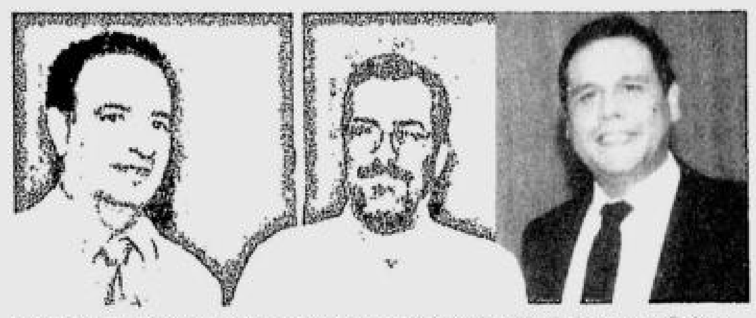
DIPLOMATIC SET. Argentinean Ambassador Mario Schuff and wife Silvia; Johanna Montero; European Union president Jan de Kok and wife Agnes; and Chilean Ambassador Jorge Montero

TV'S TRAVEL gal Susan Calo Medina, Romy Gorosope, Liza Nakpil and Sabor de Barcelona guest chef José Miguel Lontoc

INTERCONTINENTAL Manila GM Christian Pirodon, sales manager Michelle Marquez, Barbara Brander and husband Luis Miguel Aboitiz

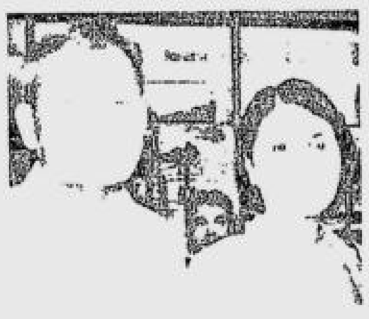
KEPPEL Phils. VP for development Ng Chin Fei; Singapore Airlines marketing, communications and services manager Rita Dy; GM Clinton Tan; Tina Monzon-Palma; Cruise Professional chair Eddie José; and Singapore Airlines' Clarissa Morelos

METROBANK'S Anna Sobrepeña, honorary consul to Guatemala Mellie Romero A. and husband Luis Ablaza



SPANISH Chamber of Commerce president José Luis Romero-Salas; Commercial Counselor of Embassy of Spain, José Miguel Cortes; and InterContinental Manila director of food and beverage Marc Cerqueda

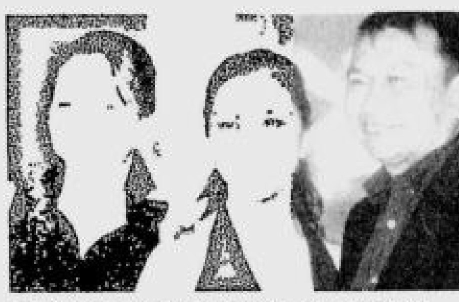
The flavors of Barcelona and a chance to fly to Spain



TRUE GOURMETS. Taipan Peter Coyiuto and Lorna Lao

BUSINESS magnate Robbie Delgado and Arnold Co

HARDWORKING Elizabeth Sy of the fab Taal Vista Hotel



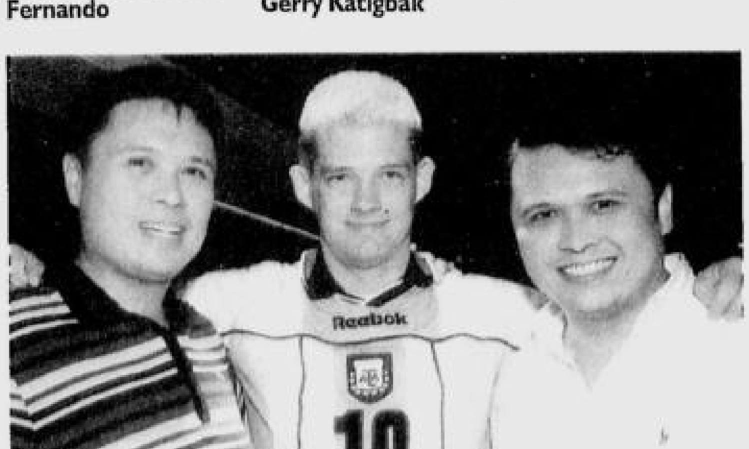
PROUD parents. Palawan Rep. Antonio Alvarez and wife Milanie A. give full support to LCI fashion graduate Isa Alvarez.

LCI MARKETING communications manager Marden Iglesias; LCI director Dr. Norma Cruz and Canadian First Secretary of Trade Francis Uy

MANILLE'S society personas Cristina Galang-Caedo, Lydia Reyes, Biya Borlongan and Mr. Lambino enjoy the LCI graduates' collection.

DYNAMIC Marikina City Mayor Marides Fernando

FACULTY members Boysie Villavicencio and Gerry Katigbak



BROTHERS Raymond and Chuck Nocon, with Nils Johnson

COOL Mark Reyes and Stylelab's Rosario Herrera

VIVACIOUS Jeanette Nocon rocks the dance floor for Aryty

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

THE TRIUMVIRATE OF INTERCONTInental *Manille*, Singapore Airlines (SIA) and Princess Cruises treated our town's true gourmets to an awesome culinary and visual preview of swinging Barcelona, the capital and hub of Spain's Catalonia region, *palanggas*.

It was the opening of Sabor de Barcelona Spanish Food Festival at the hotel's Cambrinus Bar and Sol y Sombra Restaurant. The occasion also introduced SIA's super thrice-a-week flights to Barcelona, dahlings, and unveiled Princess Cruises' exciting itineraries, especially for the 12-day dream Mediterranean cruises.

During the food fest, diners partaking of the buffet of *tapas*, wood-fire cooked paella and Catalan desserts can win two round-trip tickets to Barcelona courtesy of Singapore Airlines, or a Princess Mediterranean cruise for two, said InterContinental Manila food and beverage director **Marc Cerqueda**, who prepared the yummy but wicked Sangria, a closely guarded *famille* recipe.

Leading the toast were InterCon's well-loved general manager **Christian Pirodon** and sales and marketing director **Carmela Bocanegra**; SIA's general manager **Clinton Tan** and marketing communications and services manager **Rita Dy**; Cruise Professionals chair **Eddie José** and president **Eve Cayaban**; Spanish Economic and Commercial Counselor **José Miguel Cortes**; and Spanish Chamber of Commerce president **José Luis Romero Salas**.

Lovers of good food included French Ambassador **Gerard Chesnel**, Madame **Ning** and their daughter **Kirene**; **Cesar** and **Corrie Purisima**; Rajah Tours' **Dading Clemente** and **Tesa de Guzman**; **Mila Abad**; Czech Republic Commercial Counselor and Madame **Ivan Korcak**; **Becky Garcia**; **Lingling Cervantes**; **Terence** and **Peggy Cham**; **Nelson** and **Lorina Cabaluna**; Philippine Tatler's **Lynne Palma**; **Don** and **Rosa Liamzon**; fashion plate **Marivic Vasquez**; Cinnabon's **Jean-Pierre Etroit**; ABS-CBN's adorable **Tina Monzon-Palma**; plus others like them who enjoyed an evening of Spanish gastronomic delight, *palanggas*.

This excellent food fest is so successful it has been extended to Aug. 15, dahlings.

Definitely a must-go happening, *palanggas*. For reservations, call 8159711.

Smashing

Being a diehard La Sallalite, I dashed to this one event faster than you could bat an eyelash, *palanggas*. La Salle College International (LCI), the popular fashion school at the Bloomingdale Building on Salcedo Street, Makati, presented the smashingly successful "Fashion Issues" at the chi-chi Manila Polo Club.

One of the main objectives of La Salle's headquarters in Montreal, Canada is to transfer "relevant fashion technology and marketing."

The 2006 graduates did an excellent job, their collection enthusiastically applauded by all of us, excited fashion followers.

The colorful event showcased the collections of eight super talented fashion novices: **Vandaria Kardasani, Sarah Holgado, Samantha Ang, Olive Cruz, Jendie Legaspi, Isa Alvarez, Happy Andrada** and **Gio Dimalanta**.

The artistic young minds' distinctive designs were executed in Carolina's various fabrics, in a wide range of color palettes and silhouettes. They were complemented by chic shoes from one of our town's true fashion plates, **Ruby Gan**, no less.

Watching intently and approvingly were LCI director Dr. **Norma Cruz** and Canadian First Secretary for Trade **Francis Uy**. They agreed "this fashion course culmination speaks so much of the dynamic partnership of Philippine young artistry and Canadian education process."

Tres proud parents like Palawan Rep. **Antonio Alvarez** and stunning wife gave their full support to daughter **Isa**, and their pals congratulated every one.

The entire Ang clan of Next Jeans cheered **Samantha Ang**'s pirate-inspired collection.

Boysie Villavicencio oriented his pals like **Cristina Caedo, Lydia Reyes** and **Mr. Lambino** on the school's comprehensive courses.

LCI manager and faculty member, our *palangga* **Marden Iglesias**, welcomed woman of substance and successful entrepreneur **Annie Tanghangco**, who breezed in with eye-catching daughter **Jonina** who wants to go into fashion marketing.

LCI graduate, jewelry and accessories whiz **Kiting Aberasturi**, jetted in with Swiss fashionista **Daniel** and cheered former schoolmates and colleagues.

Young, dynamic and fashionable Marikina City Mayor **Marides Fernando** and brilliant business magnate **Paluming Pata** underscored the high quality of education at LCI, *palanggas*.

Hip bash

Aryty partied till 5 a.m., *palanggas*, as New York-based Gorilla Mobile hotshot main man, **Nils Johnson**, hosted a real hip bash. The mob was high as Embassy's DJ **Jon Herrera** dished out RnB hot tunes.

By the way, this happening celebrated Aryty Philippine launch and partnership with Friendster, the biggest social networking page in the country, dahlings.

Aryty, pronounced "all righty," launched its SMS-based overseas load service to rave reviews. The cool service, *palanggas*, saves time and money when you want to have a little load sent back home. Aryty makes it possible to transfer load to any major carrier in the Philippines by Internet or text messaging.

They are following this up with a major advancement in sending capabilities, bringing load transfer right to your Friendster page.

Aryty also lets you choose the color and theme, as well as write a headline. It's a great way to ask for load from friends abroad.

With over 2.4 million Filipinos living in the United States alone, there's a great demand to stay connected with pals and *famille*.

Aryty definitely gives you unprecedented access to load and you know what, *palanggas*? This is just the beginning of what Aryty has in store for everyone.

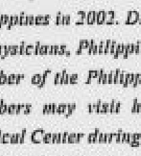
Check out Aryty.com.ph to learn more and get your own A list.

MEDICard The Healthcare I Deserve

Take Charge Doc!

What is lung cancer? And what are its risk factors?

Lung Cancer development is a multi step progression from normal to neoplastic cells or tissues of the airways and alveoli. It is often asymptomatic but symptoms may include: chronic cough, blood-streaked sputum, fever and pain. It is managed with surgery, radiation therapy and chemotherapy. There are several types of lung cancer and these depend on its microscopic appearance. Most cases are caused by the environment, primarily from tobacco exposure. Genes have a role in susceptibility, but which ones and the extent is unclear. Other possible causes are occupational exposures (arsenic, asbestos, bischloromethyl ether, hexavalent chromium, nickel, polycyclic aromatic compounds, radon, vinyl chloride), radiation, air pollution, diet (high fat, low antioxidant) and nutrition. Preventing lung cancer could be done by preventing the onset of smoking in the youth, promoting smoking cessation among addicted smokers, minimizing workplace carcinogen and radiation exposure. In the recent years there has been a downward trend in lung cancer occurrence primarily due to the past reduction in smoking prevalence however, it may continue to be the most common cause of cancer deaths unless we achieve further reduction in smoking prevalence.



This week's answer to our feature question was provided by our medical service provider from Metro Manila. Dr. Rey Caesar R. Anunciacion specializes in Pulmonary Medicine. He obtained his residency training for Internal Medicine in 1999 and later took his sub-specialty course for Pulmonology at the Lung Center of the Philippines in 2002. Dr. Rey is a diplomate of the Philippine College of Physicians, Philippine Specialty Board of Internal Medicine and a member of the Philippine College of Chest Physicians. MEDICard members may visit him for consultation services at World Citi Medical Center during Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays from 2pm to 5pm and Tuesdays & Thursdays from 10am to 4pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

A great fitness idea

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AGO, Kathy and Peter Davis had an idea. They envisioned an organization to upgrade and professionalize the growing dance exercise (as aerobics was first called) industry.

That's how Idea, International Dance Exercise Association, was born.

Today, Idea is one of the world's largest associations of fitness professionals from all fields of fitness instruction—group exercise teachers, personal trainers, athletic trainers, yoga and Pilates instructors, lifestyle coaches, and physical therapists.

Every year, Idea holds the World Fitness Convention. I have attended this convention for 16 years. I always come back excited to teach new exercise formats. The event itself is quite an experience.

One might think that being a fitness convention, all attendees would be slim. Not so. Fitness does not mean thinness.

Instructors come in all shapes and sizes, from petite to plus-size. Some men look like they can lift a refrigerator while others look like fashion models.

There are Amazon-type women and those with ladylike physique. Once in a while, you see a "god" or "goddess" with abs and buns of steel but, for the most part, instructors have normal-looking bodies.

No matter their size or shape, two physical characteristics that instructors share are good posture and an energetic aura.

Knowing the participants' dedication to healthy eating, Idea set up food stations in strategic places selling oatmeal, yogurt, milk, salads, fresh fruits, and low-calorie sandwiches and hot dishes.

Extreme diets

Some extreme food choices sometimes challenge the patience of hotel staff. I overheard a waiter in a hotel restaurant complaining, "These people are driving me crazy. Some want only potatoes, some no potatoes, some no meat, some all meat, some no eggs, and others only egg whites. Doesn't anyone here eat normally?"

You definitely have to be fit to attend this convention. Sessions are held at the host hotel and the convention center.

Just to get from one class to another usually means a 10-minute walk. Repeat this four to five times a day then add the physical effort required to learn exercise techniques and the energy necessary to shop at the expo and party at night in the various social events. The result, after four days, is a group of very tired and sore instructors.

At the start of the convention, almost everyone skips the escalators and bounds up the stairs. By the end of the event, the escalators are full.

Wisdom over beauty

Since fitness is a physical career, a natural assumption would be that young and sexy fitness presenters are in great demand. The opposite is true. Older and more mature instructors are the top presenters.

Younger instructors look up to their seniors as mentors and a source of inspiration. The industry has learned to appreciate and respect the wisdom that comes with age and experience.

I have noticed that, as fitness professionals approach their 50s, they are no longer as lean and "cut" as they used to be, even if they maintain their fitness levels.

This is most likely a result of the natural aging process and may be a conscious decision not to be so obsessed with appearance.

The evolution from form to function is also reflected in the workout apparel worn and sold at the convention. Most designs tend to be athletic rather than sexy.

Revealing outfits are still around but they are the exception rather than the rule. A friend asked me to buy her "itty-bitty" shorts and I had a hard time finding them even in the stalls selling Brazilian outfits.

With their commitment to learn and improve their craft, special needs have not kept instructors from attending the convention.

Through the years, I have seen pregnant attendees, breastfeeding mothers with young babies, and instructors on crutches and wheelchairs, still recovering from accidents.

Idea is a true global event. Each country has its own unique characteristic. As soon as they leave a workshop, for instance, the Japanese videotape what they have just learned right then and there in the hallway. Naturally, they use the most high-tech equipment.

In my opinion, the Brazilians are the sexiest, Italians the most stylish, Americans the most athletic-looking, Latinos the loudest, and Europeans the most serious.

Next week: New fitness ideas
Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Squat with rotation and side leg lift

STRENGTHENS TRUNK muscles, shoulders and hips

Equipment:

Medicine ball (weighing 4-8 pounds). Options: rubber ball, dumbbell

Exercise technique:

1. Stand with feet about shoulder width apart. Hold ball at waist level.
2. Squat and rotate at the waist to the right without moving your legs. This is your starting position.
3. Straighten up from the squat as you simultaneously move the ball in a diagonal pattern from your hip to left shoulder and lift your right leg sideways.
4. Return to starting position.
5. After desired number of repetitions, repeat on other side.

Performance tips:

1. Rotate with your waist, not just your arms.
2. Be sure to shift weight from one leg to the other as you transfer the ball from your hip to shoulder.

Repetitions:

Ten repetitions per side.

Things you can live with or without

TO HAVE IS GOOD BUT NOT TO HAVE may save your life.

Habits, cravings and directions may lead to abuse, neglect, indifference and, eventually, illness.

Let's start with things you can…

Live without

Sugar—A diet composed mainly of bread, jam, cakes and starchy food may lead to diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

John's story: When his doctor told him he couldn't be discharged from the hospital after a routine executive checkup, John panicked. He was a successful businessman who, at 55, did not look like a candidate for heart disease.

John avoided fried foods and animal fat and, with no family history of heart problems, he believed that keeping his weight stable was enough to fight off any disease.

But he was proved wrong.

Recent studies put as high-risk a sedentary lifestyle marked by an excess in animal proteins and saturated fats and refined carbohydrates. In short, if you move less and eat more unhealthy food, then you are shortening your life.

Clinician David Ludwig of the School of Medicine, Harvard University, recommends a return to "Paleolithic nutrition," our prehistoric ancestors' diet of berries, fruits and vegetables.

Bad dietary choices contribute to peaks of insulin and the body, at some point, may become insulin-resistant.

Points to ponder

"Sugar and sweet foods are not carcinogenic but could contribute to colon cancer in so far as they divert from a protective diet, favor obesity, and increase the glycemic load and the secretion of insulin," said Dr. Edward Giovannucci of the School of Public Health, Harvard University.

For those with a sweet tooth, it is best to eat sweets after a meal than having them throughout the day.

Stress: In the past 20 years, it was found that women outlived men by a margin of 10 years, but the gap has started to close in recent years.

Why? Because living an active life outside the home means exposure to factors that can hasten one's demise—late nights, drinking, smoking and stress.

Stress floods the body with stress hormones that will put the constitution in an acidic state. Significant pressure is placed on heart musculatory and respiratory systems.

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

Did you know that dealing with annoyances like traffic, deadlines, appointments, quotas, household and office routines can be as damaging to you as sudden stresses like accidents and changes like moving to a new house?

While stressors cannot be prevented, you can avoid, manage or transcend them. Here's how: When confronted with a stressful situation, you can, a) talk to yourself in a calm, reassuring manner, saying, "I am in control, the situation is not in control of me"; b) allow your mind and not your heart dictate your reactions; and c) sit quietly for two minutes to compose yourself.

Live with

Good bacteria: There are many approaches to health. Exercise, diet, fresh air and clean water are better known, but there is another approach you can consider—probiotics bacteria. After all, the external environment is just as important as the internal environment.

Residing in our gut are millions of microorganisms. They assist in the breakdown of food waste and manufacture vitamins and nutrients.

If the work of the gastrointestinal tract is disrupted, the following can happen: diarrhea, irritable bowl syndrome, constipation, hemorrhoids, gall bladder disease, pancreatic disease, yeast infection, indigestion. They may be caused by antibiotics, birth and control pills, sedentary lifestyle, and monotonous overuse of certain foods. Thus, the need for lactobacilli supplementation.

In 1951, Dr. Ivan Bogdenov in Sofia, Bulgaria, isolated a strain of lactobacillus bulgaricius that had anti-cancer/tumor activities. The finding was supported by research at Sloan Kettering Institute for Cancer Research.

By taking a supplement of live bacteria before meals, one can observe the following changes: improved complexion, digestion, bowel movement, general well-being. Now in Manila is OMX from Bio Bank Co. Japan, distributed by Ruche Corp. (tel. 7501713, 8447477).

Beauty treatment

Pierce a capsule of Vitamin E. Squeeze a few drops and apply around the eye area before sleeping to treat fine lines.

Affirmation for the day

"My life is as abundant as my expectation."

While the list of things one can live with and without may be endless, there is one item that we cannot live without, love… The power that moves the sun, the moon and stars is the same one that runs through every fiber of your being. Allow it to move, inspire and heal you in all you do and, ultimately, all that you are and will become. So, love!

Love and light!

Celebrate life with Cory Q. and SM at SM Cebu, 2-5 p.m., Aug. 12. See you there!

When you need more than just a lullaby

From page C1

ple have to realize they are suffering from sleep disorder.

The next step is to seek professional help. Sarte says there are now 25 sleep specialists in the country. He estimates the average cost of medical treatment for sleep disorders at P15,000.

But sometimes the problem may be remedied simply by making changes in your environment to make it more conducive to deep, sound sleep.

Sarte says for people who need no more than adjustments in their sleeping environment, and who have the budget for it, it may be a good idea to invest in a good mattress and pillow like Tempur products.

STEPHEN Thirgood says Tempur may work better than pills.

Tempur uses technology and material that made it easier for American astronauts to deal with gravitational changes as they blasted off into space, leaving Earth's magnetic pull to move into a weightless atmosphere.

Stephen Thirgood, Tempur business development manager for Asia-Pacific, says Tempur is a long-term solution to many common sleep problems.

Natural positions

The temperature sensitive and pressure-relieving material used in Tempur mattresses and pillows are designed to support the neck and spine while resting. It is meant to allow the body to assume the most natural, hence, the most comfortable, positions, even in sleep.

The material supposedly also allows unhampered blood circulation during sleep, absorbs pressure and eliminates pressure points that make people toss and turn at night.

Thirgood says, though the initial investment on Tempur may be steep, it is more cost-effective and safer in the long run in curing simple sleeplessness than medical solutions like pills and other procedures.

Rather than spending a fortune on a bed frame that looks good, Thirgood says the money will be put to better use by purchasing a Tempur mattress, as well as pillows.

Exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Focus Global Inc., a Tempur pillow sells for P5,000-P7,000 with a three-year warranty. A mattress costs P80,000-P150,000 and the overlay costs P50,000, both with a 15-year warranty. The products also have anti-bacterial and anti-allergy properties.

Tempur has a showroom at the 5/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City, tel. 6311391. Its website is www.tempur.com.

Why people dream and other questions

Part I

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

LET ME DEVOTE THIS COLUMN to various questions sent in by readers and by listeners of my dzMM radio program.

Why do we dream? What is the effect if we do not dream?

Dreaming is apparently necessary for our psychical health, as well as for our general well-being.

In a scientific study conducted in the '70s at the Maimonides Dream Laboratory of the Maimonides General Hospital in Brooklyn, New York, pioneer dream researchers Dr. Montague Ullman and Dr. Stanley Krippner found that everybody averaged 30 dreams an evening.

They then tried to find out what would happen if people were deprived of dreams. They woke up a person as soon as s/he started to dream.

They could tell when a person was dreaming through the brain waves and the rapid-eye movement that indicated a dream was taking place.

After weeks of preventing subjects from dreaming, the researchers found that these people developed nervousness, irritability, depression, and other emotional and psychological problems.

The symptoms disappeared as soon as they stopped interrupting the natural dreaming process.

If reincarnation were true, how come nobody ever recalled being an animal in a previous life, during a past life regression?

Something is wrong with this question. It implies that we should have been animals in the past for reincarnation to be true. This is what is known in elementary logic as a "loaded question."

It is similar to the question, "Have you stopped beating your wife?" It implies you were beating her before.

Reincarnation does not presuppose a previous animal existence. As a matter of fact, in all the 5,000 regressions conducted by psychologist Dr. Helen Wambach on 3,000 subjects, not one ever recalled being an animal in a previous life.

That does not mean reincarnation is not true. Several western scientific studies found no evidence of a person reincarnating as an animal.

It is true some eastern religions, notably Hinduism and Buddhism, believe a human being can reincarnate as an animal, depending on how s/he lived his/her life.

Although I respect such religious belief, I have not yet come across hard evidence that that is the case.

Are spirit guides true? How do spirit guides differ from guardian angels?

In 1960, French journalist Pierre Jovanovic wrote a very interesting book, "An Enquiry into the Existence of Guardian Angels." In the book, a product of several years of meticulous investigative work, Jovanovic proved beyond reasonable doubt the existence of guardian angels. The book is full of documented accounts of angelic information into human lives.

What's the distinction between angels and spirit guides? A guardian angel is a religious concept. According to the Christian religion, an angel is a "messenger of God," and a "guardian angel" is assigned by God to every person at the time of his/her birth.

An angel is a pure spirit who has never had a human physical existence. A spirit guide is a being that guides another by mutual agreement, to help him/her out during a particular time. A spirit guide may have lived life on the physical plane. A person may have more than one spirit guide.

How long does it take for one to reincarnate after death?

This depends on the consciousness of the individual soul and his karma. There is no fixed or standard time for everyone.

Some souls remain in the spirit world for years to learn certain lessons before they incarnate back to earth. On the other hand, I've read of souls incarnating in the same family while the parents are still alive. So there is no standard answer to this question.

Is there any scientific proof of the human aura?

Yes. Several scientific studies were done on the human aura. The first was conducted by a Dr. Kilner, a British medical scientist at the St. Thomas Hospital in London in the 1800s.

He developed what became known as the Kilner Screen. It is a flat piece of glass that enables ordinary persons to see the aura of another individual simply by looking through that glass. The glass is laced with certain chemicals or dyes that render the aura of a person visible.

In 1939, a husband-and-wife team of photographers, Semyon and Valentina Kirlian from Krasnodar, Russia, invented what has since been called Kirlian Photography.

They accidentally revealed the auric emanation in plants and humans by using high-voltage photography. Living things they photographed showed vivid colors around them.

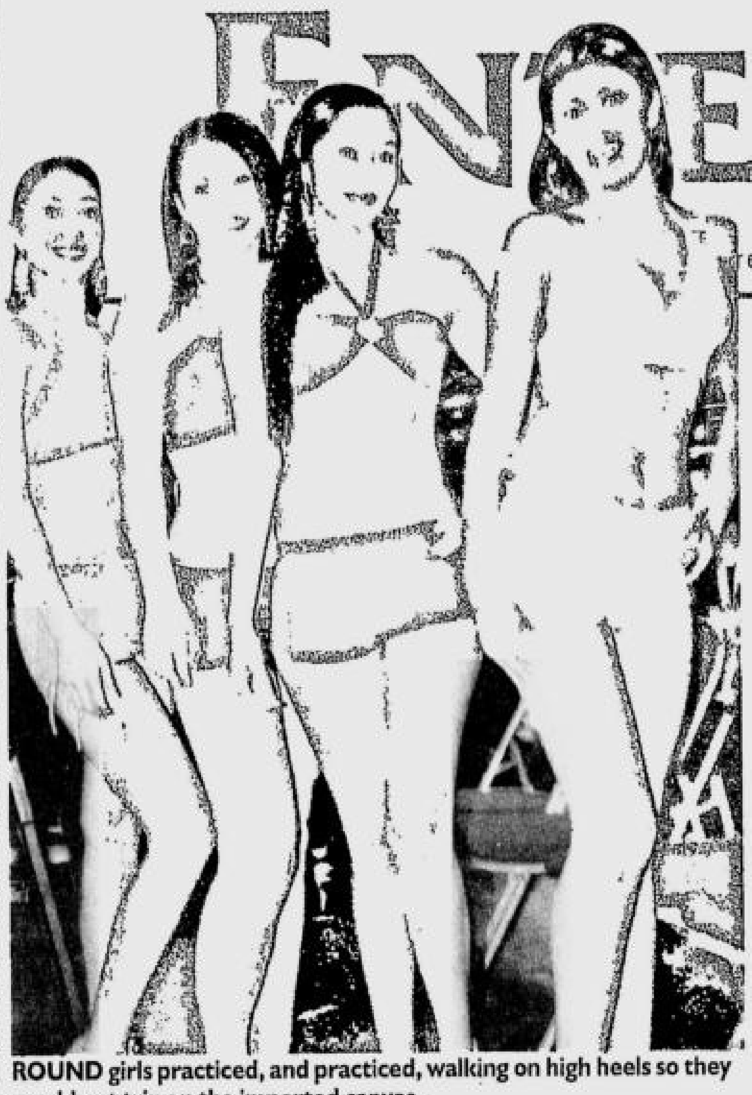
Kirlian Photography is still controversial. Some scientists question whether what is seen through Kirlian photography is really the aura or just some reflection of light. Others, however, believe in it.

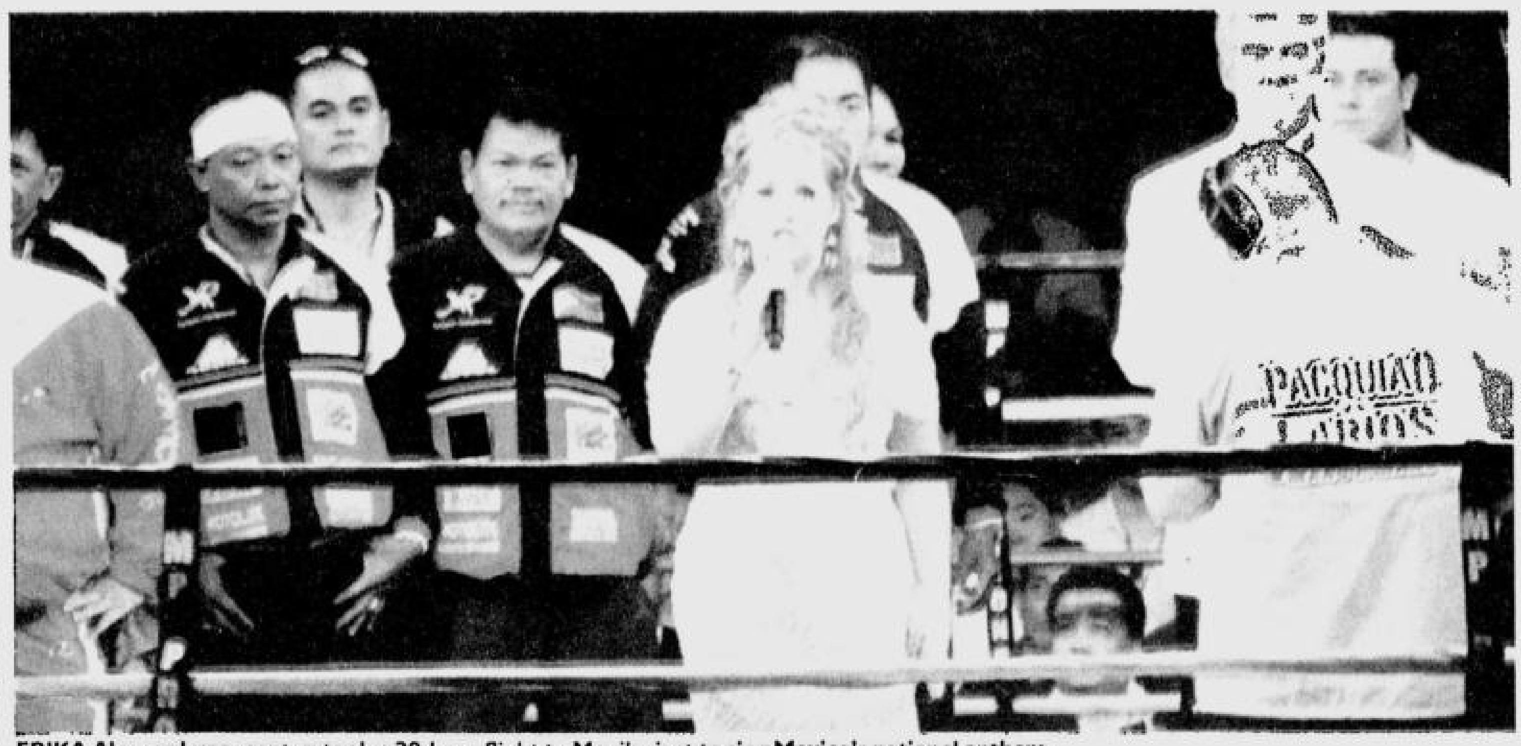
Psychics and clairvoyants see the human aura without need of any instrument. And they have confirmed the existence of the human aura.

Next week: More questions from readers will be answered

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde
ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph


ROUND girls practiced, and practiced, walking on high heels so they would not trip on the imported canvas.



ERIKA Alcocer Luna, center, took a 20-hour flight to Manila, just to sing Mexico's national anthem.

Mounting a multimillion-dollar sports event

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD.

The way Peter Musngi put it, mounting an international sports event in the Philippines could push even a workaholic over the edge.

Musngi, vice president of ABS-CBN's Sports and Manila Radio divisions, insisted that he didn't need to exaggerate in describing the "historic" Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios showdown at the Araneta Coliseum on July 2. He said it posted ratings of 65.7 in Mega Manila and an audience share of 96 to 99 percent in urban centers nationwide.

But the whole crew had been nervous over insufficient time up till the final leg of preparations, Musngi said. A concert by the American band The Village People at the same venue had ended at midnight, leaving the team less than eight hours to set up.

In an exclusive interview, Musngi told INQUIRER Entertainment 220 network employees had labored day and night for the event, which was to be beamed worldwide. Needless to say, the station's 1,400-strong workforce was all hands on deck on the big day.

Musngi recalled: "Our broadcast consultant from the US, Frank Belmont, at first thought he needed eight more Americans to oversee the production. After an ocular inspection, he said he was confident we could do it on our own."

His team had experience on its side, he noted. "Our sports division regularly airs the University Athletics Association of the Philippines (UAAP), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), PBL (Philippine Basketball League), Asian Formula 3 Motoring, badminton and world poker tour. We also had a regional boxing bout, 'Knockout.' Manny was a graduate of that contest in 2000, when he was a newcomer."

Serious fretting

Even so, Musngi said, owing to a slew of reasons, he became more "OC" than usual for that match.

To start with, for the ring canvas, the network had to buy the internationally approved brand Everlast. "The boxers might slip if we used any other brand," he explained. The canvas was also a prime spot for advertisers.

"The company logos of Alaxan, Smart and LBC could be seen in the top shot." Those premium spots cost P20 million each but, Musngi hastened to add, "That was part of a package."

It was a logistic labyrinth.

"We had 12 cameras, excluding those outside the coliseum," the network exec said. "We had more than 30 microphones all over the place. We also had two OB vans: sports and audio. On stand by were eight ambulances. We also had to run the entire ABS-CBN network on three generators before, during and after the fight."

His explanation: Although ABS-CBN is owned by the same clan—the Lopezes—behind Meralco, the network couldn't risk a sudden power outage in the middle of the fight, "especially since it was being watched by a global audience."

It was the first time they had three audio feeds—English, Filipino and Spanish—emanating from the same source, he said. "We had two American experts, commentator Col. Bob Sheridan and analyst Dave Bontempo. Sheridon was the same commentator for the 'Ali-Frazier: Thrilla in Manila' fight in 1975. He was happy to be back. Ring announcer was Michael Buffer. The Spanish commentator was Juan Larena."

The network flew in Larios' compatriot, Erika Alcocer Luna, who had topped the talent search "La Academia," to sing the Mexican national anthem. "She took a 20-hour plane ride just for that. Bituin Escalante did 'Lupang Hinirang' a cappella."

Musngi said it was also his job to make sure the round girls were well-rehearsed.

"They had to wear high heels; I was afraid they might trip. An hour before going on air, I asked them to practice walking on the canvas again," he said.

Revenue streams

The eight girls were earlier picked in a contest held on the defunct gag show, "Good Time."

Since ABS-CBN held the worldwide broadcast rights to the bout, the network made sure to tap different broadcast platforms and "revenue streams."

Apart from the delayed airing on ABS-CBN

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Star quality without the star complex

DOLLY WOOD
Dolly Ann Carvajal

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME THAT CESAR MONtano celebrated his birthday in true show biz fashion. "This party is not for me but for all my friends in the biz. It's my way of thanking them for their support. I usually just have a quiet celebration at home." Buboy remains unaffected by all the fame. He's got star quality without the usual star complex.

His ravishing wife Sunshine organized the party at Aruba for him. "When we're sweet, we're super sweet. When we fight, OA *din kami!* (laughs)," Shine says. "But I think the conflict keeps us together. It gives our marriage spice."

Spicing things up at Buboy's bash were **Christopher de Leon, Celia Rodriguez, Annabelle Rama, Monsour del Rosario, Ricky Davao, Richard and Roni Merk, Bayani Agbayani, Tirso and Lyn Cruz, Vhong Navarro** and **GF Desiree del Valle, Joel Torre and Ronnie Lazaro**, to name a few. Buboy and his guests took turns jamming with the band. We were held captive by his guitar strumming and singing.

The birthday boy told me that his eldest daughter got married. "*Mabait ang napangasawa niya!* At first, *pinahirapan ko ng konti.* I challenged him *kung kaya niya mag*-bike sa mountains with me. That was a great bonding time for us!"

Buboy really knows how important it is to find time for bonding and that's exactly what he did at his well-attended birthday bash. Even sans the goodie bags and prizes Buboy gave away at his party, anyone close to him will say he's really a born giver.

FYI (For Your Indulgence)

• Santino, the 5-year-old love child of **Jericho Rosales** (with **Kai Palomares**), has a print ad for Ralph Lauren kids. The adorable kid posed as a golfer. Is this a signal that he's following in his dad's footsteps? The proud ma says, "He did it for fun. It will be a different thing if he'll have an ad with his dad in the future. I informed Echo about Santino's ad. I didn't ask him. I told him pointblank (laughs)." No objections echoed between them.

• **Dennis Trillo** and his friends are putting up a bar called Barracks, where they plan to put tables and chairs inside parked army trucks to give a semblance of the garrison where troops are stationed. It will be a great place to unwind when you're battle-weary after the daily grind.

• There is nothing obscene in the love scene of **Dingdong Dantes** and **Iza Calzado** in Regal Entertainment's much-awaited epic romance "Eternity." *Direk* **Mark Reyes** says it's sensuous but not at all vulgar. It took three hours to shoot because of the heavy downpour. The scene has the approval of both Dingdong's GF **Karylle** and Iza's BF **Jerry**. Hopefully, it will get the MTRCB's nod too.

STAR/ D2

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3	THE ANT BULLY	1:55, 4:10, 6:25, 8:50	R-13
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JUST MY LUCK	2:15 / 4:45 / 7:15 / 9:45
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2	12:50 / 3:50 / 6:50 / 9:50
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1	MIAMI VICE	12:05 R4 / 2:05 / 5:05 / 8:05
1	SUKOB	12:10 R2 / 2:00 / 4:10 / 6:20 / 8:30
2	ANT BULLY	12:00 / 2:00 / 4:00 / 6:00 / 8:00
5	WOLF CREEK	12:05 R3 / 1:40 / 3.55 / 6:10 / 8:25
3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2	12:10 R3 / 2:30 / 5:30 / 8:30

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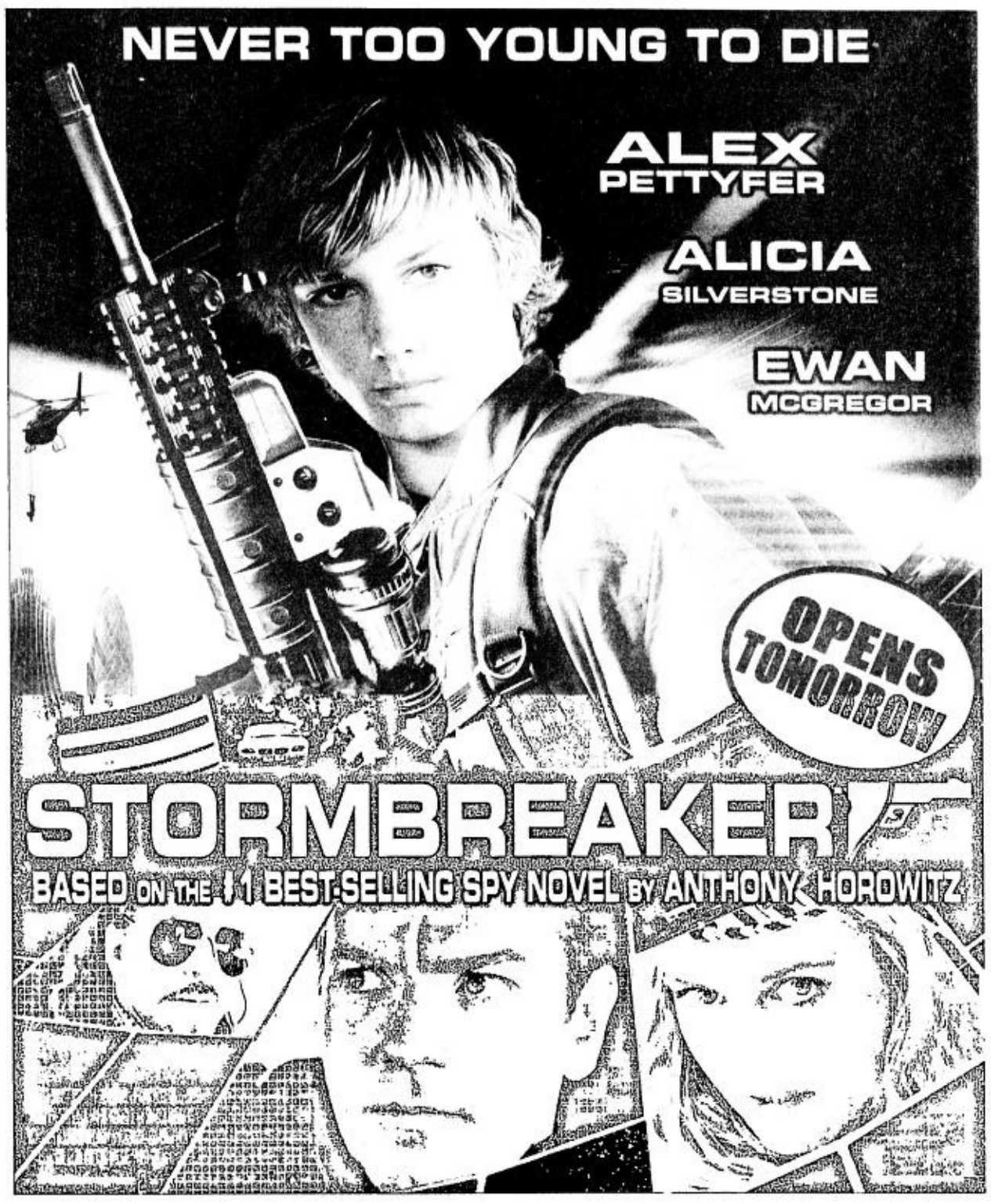
The making of a multimillion-dollar sp

From page D1

2, the telecast was beamed live, via fiber-optic cable straight to San Francisco, via partners Direct TV and In Demand. The fight was also available on the Internet, via ABS-CBN Now. "A subscriber could watch it on his computer through broadband technology," said Musngi.

Sky Cable, he added, also offered it on pay-per-view, at P300 to P500 for each local subscription. In the US, it was priced at $29.95.

It was also beamed, "via close-circuit," to 39 movie houses nationwide—in Rockwell, SM and Robinsons cinemas, with tickets selling at P3 so th h



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G4	1 THE ANT BULLY	2 JUST MY LUCK	3 THX MIAMI VICE 11:30, 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 THE PRODUCERS	5 WOLF CREEK	6 SUKOB	7 THE BREAK-UP
GB1	1 SUKOB		2 MIAMI VICE	
GB3	1 THX THE ANT BULLY 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX MIAMI VICE 12:50, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 JUST MY LUCK 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE BREAK-UP 2:20, 4:30, 6:40, 8:50, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SUKOB 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX MIAMI VICE		2 SUKOB	
	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	5 THE BREAK-UP	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 SUKOB	2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN DEAD MAN'S CHEST	3 THE ANT BULLY	4 LOVEWRECKED
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1 SUKOB		2 WOLF CREEK	
	3 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	4 MIAMI VICE	5 THE ANT BULLY	

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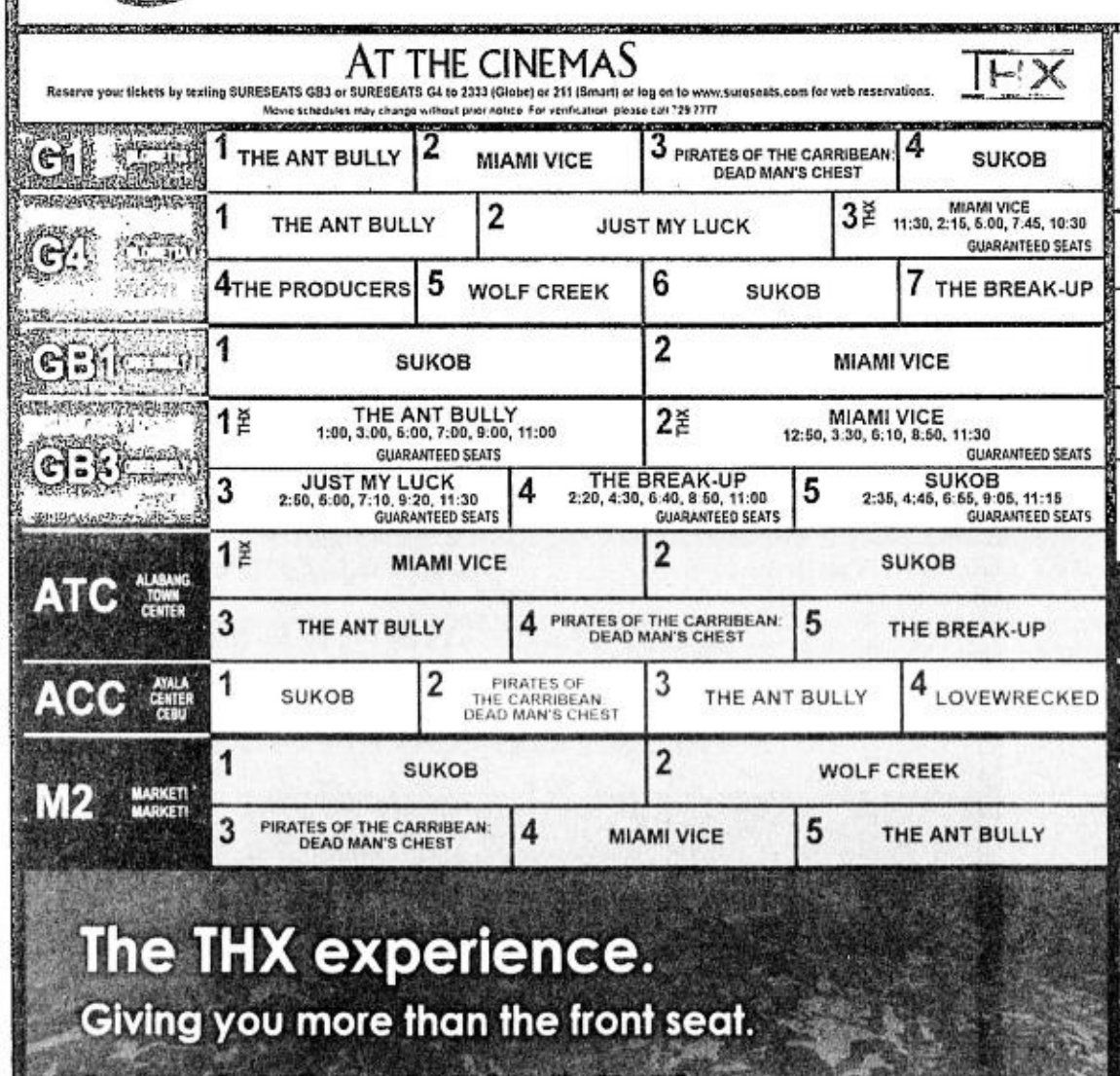

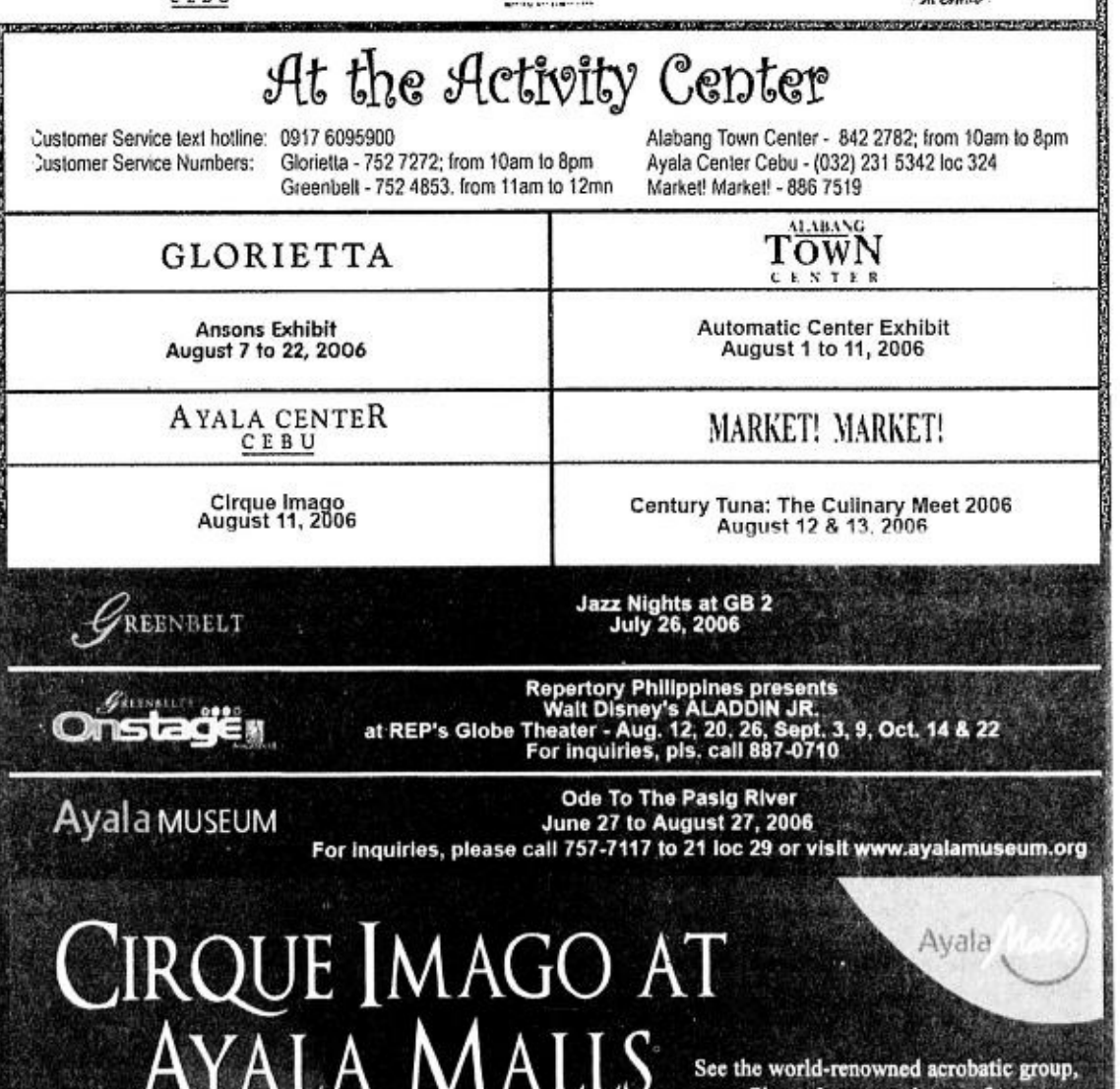

orts event

00. There were also team-ups with ne hotels for ballroom screenings. With all those revenue streams, network stood to gain exactly v much?

'Of course we had a target," Musngi said. "Suffice it to say that whatever the investment was, we could expect a bit more than that," he said.

Exactly how much was the investment? "It's in the millions ... of dollars," he quipped.

According to the grapevine, revealed Maloli Espinosa, network vice president for Government, Corporate Affairs and PR, HBO wanted to buy the US rights to the fight for $12 million.

Musngi acknowledged that Pacquiao had asked ABS-CBN to talk with HBO, but that negotiations fell through, Direct TV and In Demand, which also airs The Filipino Channel, clinched the deal.

So is Musngi raring to do the November rematch of Pacquiao and Erik Morales?

"We're just airing it; we're not mounting it," he said. "I can do another Pacquiao-Larios only after a very long holiday."

Star quality without the star complex

From page D1

• **Piolo Pascual** is wrapping up his first full-length digital film "Chopsuey" under Gee Entertainment Production. It's about a Chinoy family beset with tragedies. Piolo's role is challenging because he has to show what it's like to be extremely depressed without much dialogue. His soulful eyes will do most of the talking.

• **Keanna Reeves** never had it so good. That's why she's not handling fame properly. Her head has swollen to a size bigger than her breasts. She kinda reminds me of **Ethel Booba**. Perfect figure. Imperfect English. (Not to mention that **Andrew Wolfe**, Ethel's ex, is now Keanna's flame). There was a time Ethel reigned supreme on GMA 7. A director told me that it was Ethel's attitude problem that caused her downfall. The two sexy comediennes had humble beginnings. Somewhere along the way to fame, they lost that humility. Are they also both going to have tragic endings?

• Guess who this award-winning actor is. He was once rumored to be the paramour of another multi-awarded actor. Their denials were scoffed at by those. in the know. Now he is said to be the lover of an openly gay actor. That's what I call GAYrry-go-round.

Gary V @ 23

IT HAS been 23 years, and **Gary Valenciano** continues to be a living testimony to the Philippine music industry. This month, Mr. Pure Energy lives milestone upon milestone with his return to the stage in a series of concerts, his multiple nominations at the MTV Pilipinas Awards and the achievement of his recent albums that turned gold.

Catch him at the Music Museum for his concert "Gary V @ 23" on Aug 17, 18, 24, 25, 31 and Sept. 1 and 8 at 8 p.m. It will feature 100 percent Gary V recordings, from start to finish. For tickets, call 7227850 or visit www.garyv.com.

Dull idol?

JUST recently, ABC Channel 5's "Philippine Idol" was formally launched. But even before its television debut, organizers were aggressively trumpeting its entry in the local scene. To say that the publicity campaign was rabid would be an understatement. But sad to say, the outcome was inversely proportional to the efforts made. "Philippine Idol" reportedly logged a measly 7.7 percent rating in its pilot episode, which is considered pivotal in any show that aims to make a decent cut in the audience pie—and much more in the ratings game.

Personal: Birthday hugs to my *kapuso, kakampi* and *ka*-emote, Nelson Canlas.

For feedback, e-mail, wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com

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3 JUST MY LUCK 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
4 THE ANT BULLY 1:10 3:20 5:30 7:40 9:50
5 SUKOB 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
6 TAMARA 12:30 2:40 4:50
7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00
8 THE BREAK-UP 12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
9 WOLF CREEK 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
10 SUPERMAN RETURNS 12:30 3:40 6:50 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 SUKOB 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
2 WOLF CREEK 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 10:00
3 THE ANT BULLY 10:20 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:00
4 TAMARA 12:20 2:20 4:20 6:20 8:25 10:05
5 MIAMI VICE 10:30 1:20 4:10 7:00 9:50
6 JUST MY LUCK 12:30 2:50
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7 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:30 3:35 6:40 9:50

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2 SUKOB 11:40 2:00 4:20 6:40 9:00
3 THE ANT BULLY 12:10 2:25 4:40 6:55 9:10
4 JUST MY LUCK 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00
6 THE BREAK-UP 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 9:00
7 MIAMI VICE 12:30 3:20 6:10 9:00
8 WOLF CREEK 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

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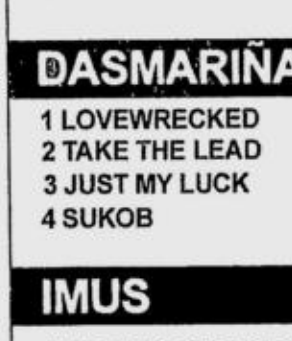
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 WILD ORCHID 2
4 UNITED 93



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1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 MIAMI VICE
7 ANT BULLY
8 CAVITE
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 SUKOB
11 THE BREAK-UP
12 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 SUKOB
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 THE BREAK-UP
6 SUKOB
7 MIAMI VICE
8 ANT BULLY
9 WHITE LADY
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 MIAMI VICE
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 SUKOB
6 TAMARA
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 WHITE LADY
9 ANT BULLY
10 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 MIAMI VICE
2 ANT BULLY
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 SUKOB
5 SUKOB
6 JUST MY LUCK

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
THE BLOCK
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 SUKOB
6 ANT BULLY
7 MIAMI VICE
8 TAMARA
9 SUPERMAN RETURNS
10 JUST MY LUCK
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
12 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 SUKOB
2 ANT BULLY
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 MIAMI VICE
7 SUKOB
8 WHITE LADY
9 TAMARA
10 SUKOB
11 LADY IN THE WATER
12 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

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2 MIAMI VICE
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY

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1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CHAOS
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUKOB

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1 JUST MY LUCK
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY BACOOR (046)417-3868
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 MIAMI VICE
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 ANT BULL
6 SUKOB
7 WHITE LADY
8 JUST MY LUCK

LUZON

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 CHAOS
2 SUKOB
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 THE NUN

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUKOB
2 TAKE THE LEAD
3 RV
4 LADY IN THE WATER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUKOB

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 SUKOB
2 SUKOB
3 ANT BULLY
4 WHITE LADY
5 CAVITE
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 JUST MY LUCK

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 NACHO LIBRE
4 SUKOB

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 ANT BULLY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 LOVEWRECKED
5 CAVITE
6 SUKOB
7 SUKOB
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 RESERVED
3 SUKOB
4 UNITED 93
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 SUPERMAN RETURNS
7 RESERVED
8 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
2 CAVITE/SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 SUKOB
4 TAKE THE LEAD
5 NACHO LIBRE
6 AMERICAN HAUNTING

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
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2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 SUKOB
4 NACHO LIBRE

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MOVIE GUIDE
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2 (Zoom) ANT BULLY
3 (Zoom) SUKOB
4 (Zoom) WOLF CREEK
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
PREMIERE
(Zoom) THE BREAK- UP

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1 SUKOB
2 WOLF CREEK
3 WILD ORCHID-2

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Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449348)
1 CHAOS
2 NACHO LIBRE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (Zoom) NACHO LIBRE
2 LOVEWRECK
3 (Zoom) ANT BULLY
4 SUKOB

Centre Plaza Cinema
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1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS

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Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
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2 THE BREAK UP
3 SUKOB
4 MIAMI VICE

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2 (Zoom) MIAMI VICE
3 (Zoom) ANT BULLY
4 (Zoom) THE BREAK UP

stармall
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266160
3 MIAMI VICE
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) SUKOB
5 WOLF CREEK

metropolis star cinema
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2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 ANT BULLY

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3 (Zoom) LADY IN THE WATER
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3 (Zoom) SUKOB

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3 (Zoom) SUKOB
4 WILD ORCHEDS

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2 (Zoom) LADY IN THE WATER
3 (Zoom) RESERVED
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1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

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1 (Zoom) SUKOB
2 (Zoom) MIAMI VICE
3 (Zoom) SUPERMAN RETURNS
4 (Zoom) ANT BULLY
5 (Zoom) THE BREAK UP
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 (Zoom) SUKOB
8 (Zoom) LADY IN THE WATER
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2 SUKOB
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Cinema 2000 Metrotown (Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
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2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 (Zoom) SUKOB
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

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1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
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1 SUKOB
2 LADY IN THE WATER

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3 SUKOB
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5 TAMARA

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2 I WANNA BE HAPPY

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2 HUBAD NA MULTO
3 BUKID AY BASA
4 (DTS) I WANNA BE HAPPY

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1 (Zoom) SUKOB
2 SAPLOT
3 (DTS) LADY IN THE WATER
4 AMERICAN SOLDIERS
5 NACHO LIBRE

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1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 THE NUN
4 NACHO LIBRE

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1 SPL
2 SUKOB
3 JUST MY LOCK
4 RESERVED

Berma Cinema (Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 WHITE LADY
2 BUKID AY DASA

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Answer the "Miami Vice" trivia questions in our daily movieguide. Cut and drop entries at any Robinsons Movieworld branch on or before August 16. Winners will get any of the following:

- *Crowne Plaza Galleria Manila Gift Certificate*
- *Gift packs from Solar-UIP*
- *Robinsons Gift Certificate*

**winners will be notified via registered mail only.*

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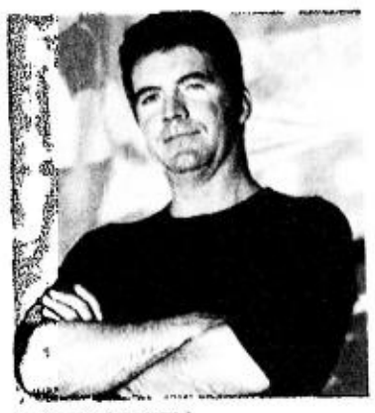
GORDON RAMSAY



SIMON COWELL

Making Simon Cowell look 'like a choir boy'

LOS ANGELES—SIMON COWell gets booed, Piers Morgan reduces kids to tears and "Supernanny" Jo Frost marches screaming American children to the "naughty chair."

Long cast as the villains in Hollywood movies, Britons with cut-glass accents and brutal put-downs are enjoying success as the bad boys and girls of US reality TV.

CHEER FACTOR

Call it refreshing honesty or simply a British penchant for sarcasm—Americans seem to be loving it.

"American Idol" judge Cowell—whose insults to wannabe singers range from the curt "Atrocious" to the fanciful "You remind me of a pet poodle"—is seen as crucial to the runaway success of the show over the last four years.

Cowell has been followed by former British tabloid newspaper editor Piers Morgan as a judge for summer ratings hit "America's Got Talent".

Briton Nigel Lythgoe is dishing the dirt as a judge on "So You Think You Can Dance" and Frost, a no-nonsense career nanny, is about to start her third US season of the "Supernanny" parenting series.

Chef Gordon Ramsay in "Hell's Kitchen" is making Cowell "look like a choirboy," according to RealityTV magazine. Ramsay, a short-tempered perfectionist, told one contestant his dish looked like "dehydrated camel's turd."

"The typical British stereotype is very cultured and polite. Part of the reason being obnoxious works is because it goes against expectations," said Robert Thompson, director of the Center for the Study of Popular Television.

Thompson said the British accent has a distancing effect that gives generally more civil Americans permission to delight in hearing their compatriots get trashed.

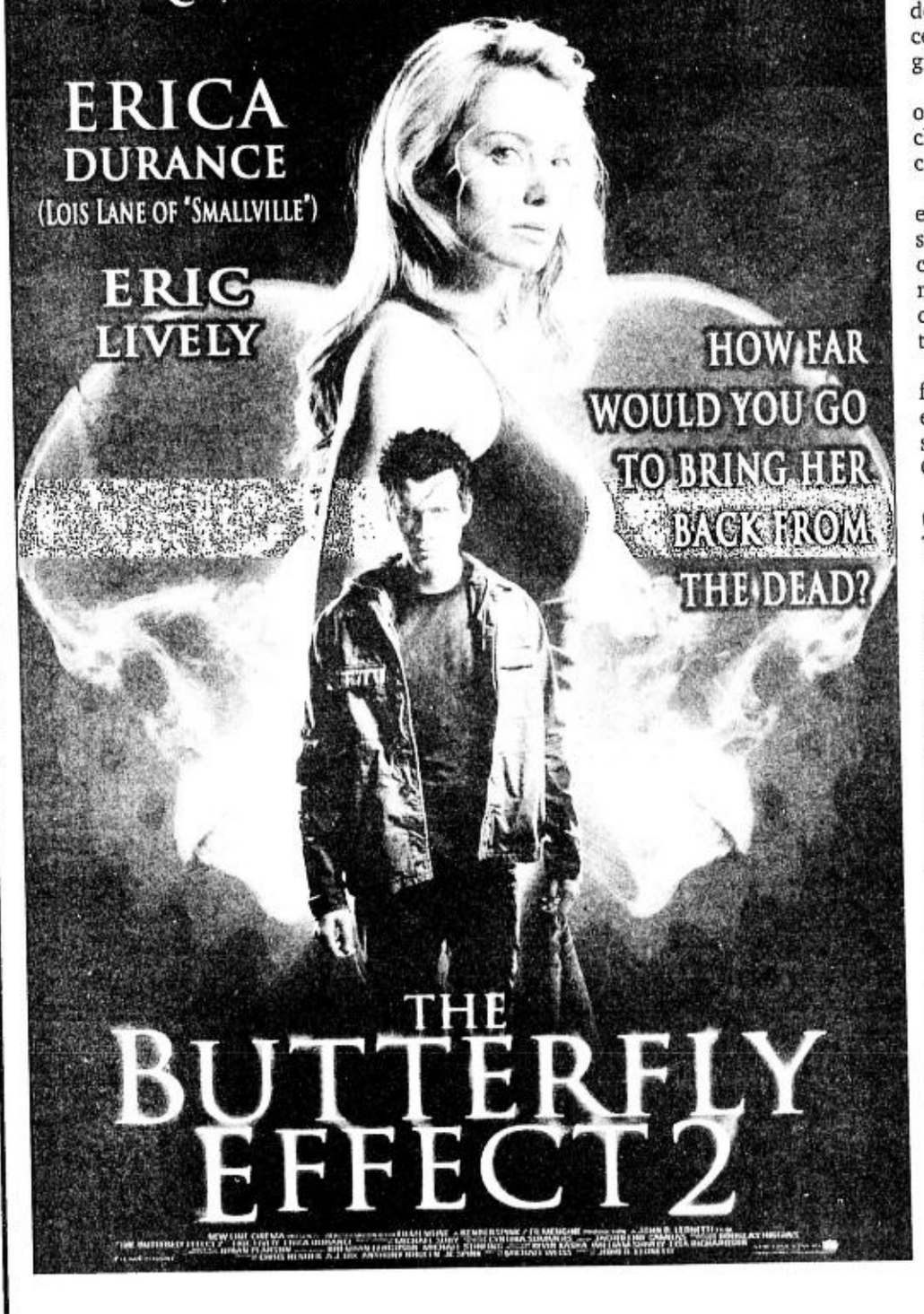
"Americans hate to be told what to do by other people, but they love to watch other people tell other people what to do," Thompson said.

Jill Serjeant, Reuters

OPENS AUGUST 16

THE SEQUEL TO THE NO.1 U.S. BOX-OFFICE HIT

ERICA DURANCE (LOIS LANE OF 'SMALLVILLE')
ERIC LIVELY
HOW FAR WOULD YOU GO TO BRING HER BACK FROM THE DEAD?



THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT 2

SHANG CINEPLEX

1 MIAMI VICE
MTRCB R-13
1.00, 4.00, 7.00, 10.00

2 ANT BULLY
MTRCB GP
1.00, 3.15, 5.30, 7.45, 10.00

3 SUKOB
MTRCB PG-13
12.20, 2.40, 5.00, 7.20, 9.40

4 WOLF CREEK
MTRCB R-18 1.20, 3.30
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 MTRCB. GP
6.00, 9.10

PREMIERE THEATRE
THE BREAK-UP
MTRCB R-13
12.00, 2.30, 5.00, 7.30, 10.00

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FIERCE PEOPLE

The rich are such a savage tribe.

OPENS TOMORROW

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SUKOB PG 1:15,3:25,5:35,7:45,10:00	MIAMI VICE R13 2:20,5:10,8:00	ANT BULLY G 1:25,3:35,5:45, 7:55,10:05
BREAK-UP R13 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10	WOLFCREEK R18 2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	MIAMI VICE R13 1:50,4:40,7:30,10:20

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CINEMA 2 WOLF CREEK 11:50, 2:05, 4:20, 6:35, 8:50 R-18
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

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CINEMA 3 MIAMI VICE 11:05, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:35 R13
CINEMA 4 MIAMI VICE 10:35, 1:25, 4:15, 7:05, 10:00 R13
CINEMA 5 ANT BULLY 10:45, 1:05, 3:20, 5:35, 7:50, 10:10 GP

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AUG. 17,18,24,25 & 31	GARY V	8:00PM

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2BU! / C1

'What's it like' now a regular feature; tell your life stories

BUSINESS / B1

PLDT profits down 8% at P6.73B in 2nd quarter income

WORLD / A22

Lebanon spurns US-backed ceasefire plan

NEWS / A18

Boncodin: Petron post doesn't mean I left Hyatt 10

MOTORING / B2-1

Special report: Ethanol debate divides drivers, engineers, manufacturers

3-day weekend coming; Aug. 21 special holiday

EXPECT A LONG WEEKEND TWO WEEKS FROM now: Aug. 19, 20, 21.

Aug. 21 is Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Day, a special nonworking holiday declared two years ago by President Macapagal-Arroyo to mark the death anniversary of the Philippines' foremost opposition leader during the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

The day falls on a Monday this year.

Aquino was gunned down on Aug. 21, 1983.

3-DAY/ A17

website: www.inq7.net

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALAN[illegible]WS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, August 9, 20[illegible] ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 242 P18

Stubborn evacuees go back for books, feed pets

By Ephraim Aguilar and Gil Francis Arevalo
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LEGAZPI CITY—IGNORING APPEALS FOR THEM to stay away from Mayon volcano, evacuees yesterday scrambled back to the villages they had left behind to scrounge for food or feed their pets. A different reason spurred Rosanna Marcellana to go back: She had to retrieve her son's school books.

STUBBORN/ A17

EDWIN BACASMAS

IT TAKES SOLDIERS in full battle gear—this one's Sgt. Juarez of the 2nd Infantry Battalion—to keep out farmers living within the 8-km danger zone at the foot of Mt. Mayon who defy urgent calls for evacuation. They choose to stay close to their harvested crops.

EDWIN BACASMAS

FROM LEBANON TO LEGAZPI, Filipinos are running for their lives out of danger zones. Carmela Nuñez, 80; Louie, 3, and his mother Teresita Bahamonde, 46, and Maria Aydalia, 73.

GMA urges Mideast peace

Asks Asean to help end war after UN plan unravels

By Christine O. Avendaño and Cynthia D. Balana

FACED WITH THE MASSIVE repatriation of Filipinos, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday urged the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to join calls for peace as a United Nations ceasefire plan backed by the United States unraveled.

"We ask our Asean neighbors to join us in calling for peace in the Middle East and its cessation of violence by all parties," Ms Arroyo said at the 39th foundation day of the regional alliance.

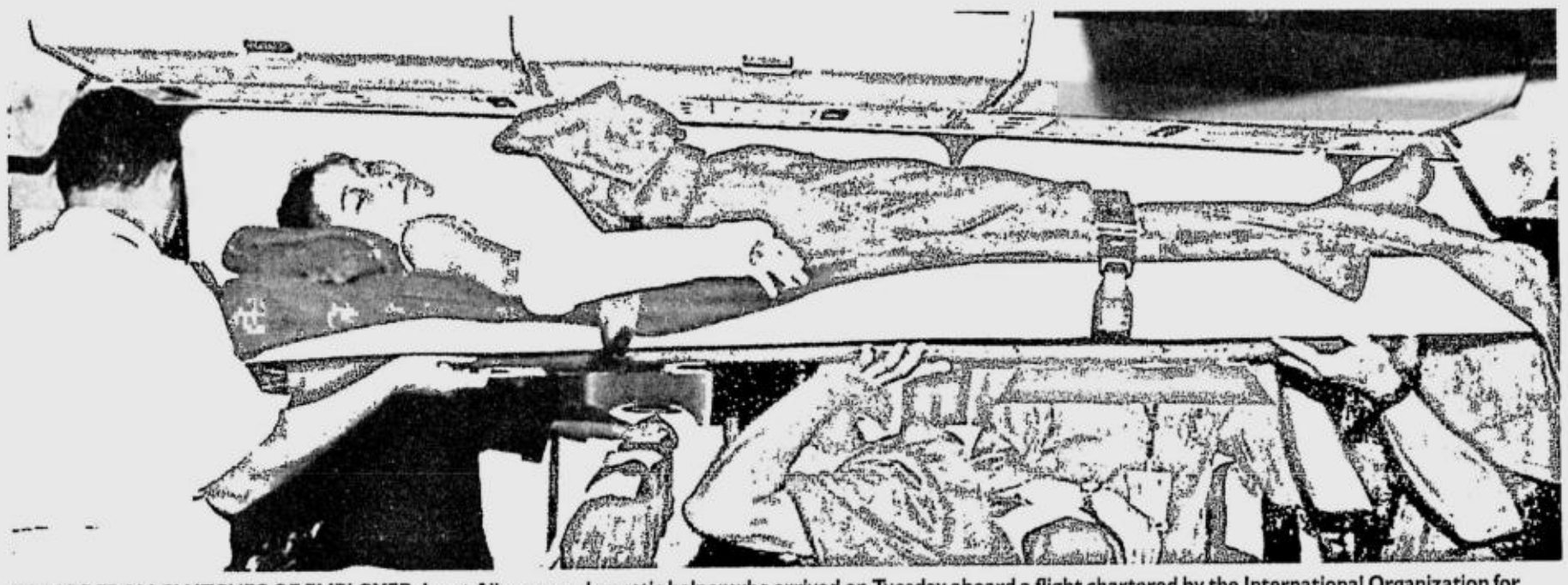
The President also vowed that Asean would push for initiatives "that will make Asean a shining institution that cares for its people or its environment and one that truly shares resources for uplifting the disadvantaged, integrating the marginalized and realizing the common good."

She recalled how through the years, the region had "seen and felt the reassuring presence of Asean humanitarian power" in countries affected by tsunami, earthquakes, landslides, volcanic eruptions and other natural disasters.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora on Monday rejected the UN ceasefire proposal supported by US President George W. Bush and demanded that Israel immediately pull out of southern Lebanon (*See story on Page A22*).

Despite global alarm at the rising casualties in the war, intensive efforts at the UN Security Council to bring about a ceasefire and lasting peace have proved difficult. Israel has vowed to expand its military offensive against Hezbollah if no diplomatic solution emerges soon.

GMA/ A6



ESCAPE FROM CLUTCHES OF EMPLOYER. Janet Aliangan, a domestic helper who arrived on Tuesday aboard a flight chartered by the International Organization for Migration, was injured when she jumped from the apartment building of her employer to join her countrymen's exodus. JESS YUSON

Palace-Senate ties worsen; more execs snub hearings

By TJ Burgonio

IN A SIGN OF WORSENING ENMITY BEtween Malacañang and the Senate, three officials of the Professional Regulation Commission and several others skipped the Senate inquiry into the alleged leakage in the June nursing board exams.

"I have been a senator for years. This is the first time I get responses such as this from officials who are asked to come here," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, chair of the committee on civil service, rued at the hearing.

Sen. Richard Gordon agreed: "I deplore these acts of the executive. Look at the situation of the PRC. We cannot do our job and they are getting away with it. I will assert it and if you ask me, I will hold them in contempt."

While miffed by the snub—the second this week by executive branch officials—senators sidestepped proposals to cite the no-shows in contempt and agreed to merely refer the matter to their legal department, avoiding a direct confrontation with the Palace.

The Senate labor committee also suspended its inquiry into the status of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration fund until after the crisis in war-torn Lebanon was over.

"We just want to strengthen our legal position on the matter. That's why we referred it to the legal department first. The results could be that we might go to the Supreme Court again. I hope not," Senate President Manuel Villar Jr. said.

Biazon said that most of the senators would rather take a sober tack on the issue, saying: "We don't want to take precipitate acts. That can only result in unnecessary institutional confrontations."

This was the consensus of the senators when they met for hours in a caucus at the Senate on Monday night to plan their course of action vis-a-vis the snubs, believed to be an offshoot of the gag order in Executive Order No. 464, Biazon said.

Hardly had the senators recovered from the snub by labor and welfare officials of their inquiry into the Owwa fund

PALACE-SENATE/ A6

House votes 54-24 to junk 7 of 8 impeach complaints

By Philip C. Tubeza and Michael Lim Ubac

DEFYING CALLS FOR LAWMAKERS linked to the fertilizer fund scam to inhibit themselves from the hearing, members of the House justice committee yesterday junked seven of the eight impeachment complaints filed against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Except for the names of the complainants and endorsers, the eight complaints had the same contents, including allegations that Ms Arroyo stole the vote in 2004, muzzled dissent, abetted political killings and diverted the fertilizer fund as largesse to her congressional and local allies to ensure her victory in the presidential election.

The justice committee recognized only the last complaint filed by the Black

HOUSE/ A8

Pinoys busiest loners, Koreans busiest lovers

LONDON—FILIPINOS SAID THEY engaged in acts of sexual self-stimulation almost six times a week, the most of any nationality.

South Korean men, meanwhile, are having sex more times a week than anyone else in the world, though Brazilian men are at it with a wider range of women, suggests an international survey published Monday.

The poll of 40,000 men for Men's Health magazine found that Britons

PINOYS/ A8

'Parish on air' story proves power of faith

By Tonette Orejas
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—THEY proved that it's possible to build a "parish on air," and that the parishioners—*kaparokya*—can grow to multitudes.

The team—Bishop Pablo David, Fr. Raul de los Santos, Fr. Deogracias Galang, film director Marilou Diaz-Abaya, musician Nonong Buencamino, a dozen seminarians and volunteers—took up the challenge.

They sustained their optimism in the face of certain questions: Can one start a television show on a budget of P6,000, keep it going minus advertisers, and get it shown without paying for airtime?

Will the viewers' interest be sustained when the hosts are not celebrities but priests, and the topic revolves around day-to-day human experiences and God?

They showed that it could be done.

PARISH/ A17

Int'l group links military to killings

By Norman Bordadora

AN INTERNATIONAL FACT-FINDING mission has concluded that the military, including the controversial Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, was involved in most of the political killings that have swept the country.

The executive summary of the findings of the International Peasant Solidarity Mission (IPSM) said: "There are clear indications of the military's involvement in most cases as reported to the investigating team. Under the command of Palparan, the military have become more brazen as cited during interviews in Central Luzon and Southern Tagalog."

"Some of the human rights violations were committed by uniformed soldiers or by men in civilian clothes who introduced themselves as soldiers," it said.

The IPSM, which came to the country on the invitation of the militant farmers' alliance Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, conducted interviews last week with the families of the peasants killed.

The group is composed of 68 delegates, 16 of whom are with foreign nongovernment and people's organizations in such countries as the United States, Belgium, Canada, the Netherlands, Japan and Nepal.

IPSM spokesperson Wim de Ceukelaire, a Belgian national, said there had been reports submitted by past fact-finding mis-

INT'L/ A6

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Batanes will experience stormy weather, while the Babuyan Group of Islands will have rains and gusty winds. Central and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will have cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of Luzon will be partly cloudy skies with rainshowers.

COMPILED BY KATE PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/08/08/06 SOURCE PAGASA

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 9, 2006

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

'PRC covering up nursing leak'

By TJ Burgonio

THE COUNSEL FOR nursing students who complained against the leakage of test questions at the recent board exams for nurses yesterday accused the Professional Regulation Commission of dragging its feet on the investigation of the controversy.

Appearing at the Senate inquiry into the leakage, Cheryl Daytec-Yangot charged that PRC sat on their complaint, complete with evidence, and conducted its own internal investigation of the leakage independent of their complaint.

Yangot told the committee on civil service, chaired by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, that she filed the complaint of the nursing students from St. Louis University in Baguio City on the alleged leakage with the PRC on June 20.

Before the complaint was filed, the students furnished the commission pieces of evidence, including review materials supposedly produced by the Gapuz Review Center allegedly containing leaked test questions, she said. The review center had denied this producing the materials.

A UST professor also submitted another manuscript containing 90 "leaked questions" to the commission, she added.

COMPLAINANTS' LAWYER Cheryl Daytec-Yangot shows to senators a copy of the nursing exam document. ROGER MARGALLO

But on June 20, despite their complaint, the PRC, chaired by Leonor Tripon-Rosero, issued a statement that there was "no leakage, and that the leakages were a thing of the past," Yangot said.

The counsel said they later followed up their case with the records and legal division of the commission, and found that these did not have copies of their complaint. They also sought audience with Rosero, but were ignored.

"No explanation is coming out for this phenomenon because the PRC has been whitewashing the case," she said at the hearing.

When asked by Biazon if the PRC attempted to cover up the case, Yangot said: "Your honor, I would not say that there are attempts to cover up, they're covering up. They're not just attempting."

The PRC eventually conducted its own internal investigation of the leakage, but this was independent of their complaint, according to the lawyer.

Rosero, and PRC Commissioners Avelina de la Rea and Renato Valdecantos snubbed the hearing on the grounds that the committee's invitation did not refer to any possible needed statute that prompted the inquiry and did not state the questions to be asked.

Biazon, however, said he had been furnished a copy of the PRC report recommending the filing of administrative charges against Anesia Dionisio and Virginia Madeja, members of the Professional Regulatory Board of Nursing.

Consortium agrees to use of vote-counting machines

By Norman Bordadora and Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE MEGA PACIFIC CONSORtium, which is under investigation for the failed billion-peso automation deal with the Commission on Elections, yesterday said it was willing to allow the use of its counting machines in the 2007 elections.

Lawyer Estrella Elamparo, counsel and spokesperson for Mega Pacific, said it would be in her client's best interest if the more than 1,000 counting machines were used as their "100 percent" accuracy would be proven for the whole country to see.

Election lawyer Romulo Macalintal asked the Supreme Court to allow the use of the consortium's counting machines despite the 2004 SC decision voiding the P1.3-billion automation contract with the poll body and order to the Comelec to return the Mega Pacific computers.

Elamparo said allowing the government to use the machines would not prejudice her client, noting that the Ombudsman's charges against Mega Pacific in connection with the allegedly anomalous 2003 contract was still the subject of a motion for reconsideration. She also noted that the firm's officials have not been charged.

It would be good if the SC disregarded technicality and allow the use of the computers "in the interest of justice," she said.

The automation of elections is back in the Senate's agenda, along with the approval of a P46.4 billion supplementary budget and P500 million for the repatriation of Filipino refugees from Lebanon.

Senate approval

Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, said the senators had reached a consensus on his SB 2231 seeking to authorize the Comelec to use an automated election system starting in the 2007 elections.

Gordon caused a stir on the last day of the Senate's second regular session last month when he denounced certain senators for blocking the scheduled approval of the bill.

He was particularly incensed at Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. who called for a more thorough debate of the automation plan because of lingering doubts on the credibility of the Comelec and the search for a fool-proof technology to prevent cheating.

But after the caucus on Monday under new Senate President Manuel Villar, Gordon said the senators had agreed to pass the measure by next week.

"It's a No. 1 priority," he said.

Sen. Joker Arroyo said the senators were deadlocked on the bill but agreed that it had to be passed.

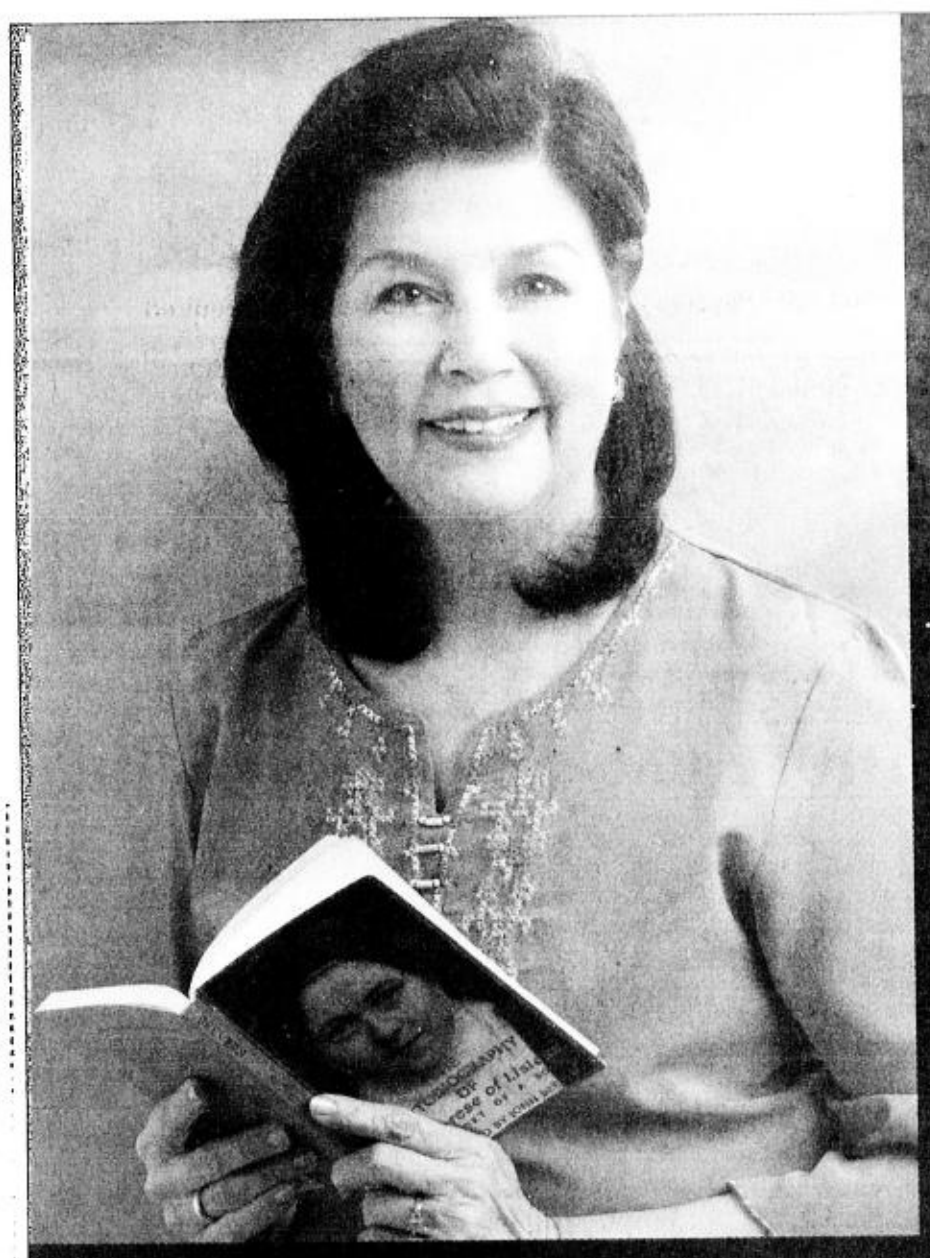
"We have to move on and we have to start somewhere," he said.

The Senate bill provides for the automation of elections on a pilot basis in 2007 and in full in the 2010 elections.

Gordon said some senators wanted Congress, not the Comelec, to determine the pilot areas to be tested and the computer system that would be used.

He said some senators were putting too much emphasis on fears that an automated system would still be prone to cheating.

"I think we're really over-worrying over this. In the automated system, the cheaters would only be in kindergarten while in our current [manual voting] system, they already have a Ph. D.," he said.



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Ombudsman asks SC for more time

By Norman Bordadora

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSman yesterday asked the Supreme Court for an extension of the deadline to complete its investigation on the culpability of Commission on Elections officials in the failed P1.3 billion election automation deal.

Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said his office might not finish the investigation by the Aug. 14 deadline given by the high court.

Villa-Ignacio earlier said the Ombudsman investigating panel wanted to make sure it does not leave anything out in its probe into the liability of Comelec commissioners for the contract with the Mega Pacific Consortium which the SC voided in 2004.

"We may not be able to finish the investigation by the Supreme Court's deadline [on Aug. 14]," Villa-Ignacio said.

The Ombudsman's Office of Legal Affairs has filed a manifestation and motion asking the high court to give it until Sept. 30 to complete its investigation.

The panel investigating the case, which is chaired by Overall Deputy Ombudsman Orlando C. Casimiro, has been conducting marathon hearings on the case and, after the first two sessions, increased the frequency from once a week to twice a week.

"[However], in the course of the proceedings, there are still facts material to the case which the investigating panel needs to be clarified on, particularly the disbursements and other financial aspects of the voided contract," the legal affairs office said.

In its initial findings that it released last June, the Ombudsman found Comelec Commissioner Resureccion Borra liable for the botched deal. Borra, as chair of the bids and awards committee, recommended the contract for approval by the Comelec en banc.

Erap denies courting Joelle

By Tarra V. Quismundo

FORMER PRESIDENT JOSEPH Estrada has denied courting Joelle Pelaez, a former beauty queen, who claims the ousted leader wooed her into falling for an allegedly fraudulent dealership with San Miguel Corp.

Offering a point-by-point rebuttal, Estrada, a known womanizer, disputed Pelaez's statement that he pursued her seven years ago.

The jailed President denied ever serenading her, giving her roses, a luxury car, a diamond-studded Rolex watch or a condominium unit in Pasig City in 1999.

Pelaez, a 29-year-old American citizen, had alleged that Estrada conspired with officials of San Miguel Corp. and the United Coconut Planters Bank (UCPB) to dupe her and her family of some P20 million worth of property, including two condominium units.

The condominium units, she said, were used as collateral for a beer dealership with San Miguel Corp., which never materialized. Pelaez alleged that the dealership was offered to her upon Estrada's instructions.

"It is obvious that the instant complaint is wholly and completely bereft of any truth or merit whatsoever as further concretely shown by the fact that the affidavit complaint does not state, indicate or allege any specific offense committed by me or any other respondents against complainant," according to Estrada's counter-affidavit to Pelaez's charges.

The former President, jailed on plunder charges in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, filed his reply to the complaint through his counsel Rufus Rodriguez during a preliminary investigation at the office of Assistant City Prosecutor Josefa Laurente yesterday afternoon.

"In the absolute absence of any merit to the instant complaint as shown above, the instant complaint must be dismissed outright for utter lack of merit," Estrada said.

Estrada's co-respondents in the case include Ramon Ang, Alfredo Bautista, Jeronimo Kilayko, Pia Guada, Yvette Cruz, top or former officials of San Miguel Corp., and UCPB officials Lorenzo Tan and Rafael Bueno Jr.

While Pelaez said she met Estrada in a party at the Renaissance Tower in Ortigas Center, Pasig in December 1998, the former President said in his reply that he first met Pelaez on Jan. 29, 1999 at a friend's birthday party in a Makati restaurant.

Legal fight for Manotok compound not yet over

THE LEGAL BATTLE OVER THE P1.7-billion Manotok Compound in Quezon City has taken a new twist with the lawyer of the winning claimant asking the Supreme Court to cite in contempt one of its former justices, Florentino P. Feliciano, the Manotoks' lawyer, for "obstruction of justice."

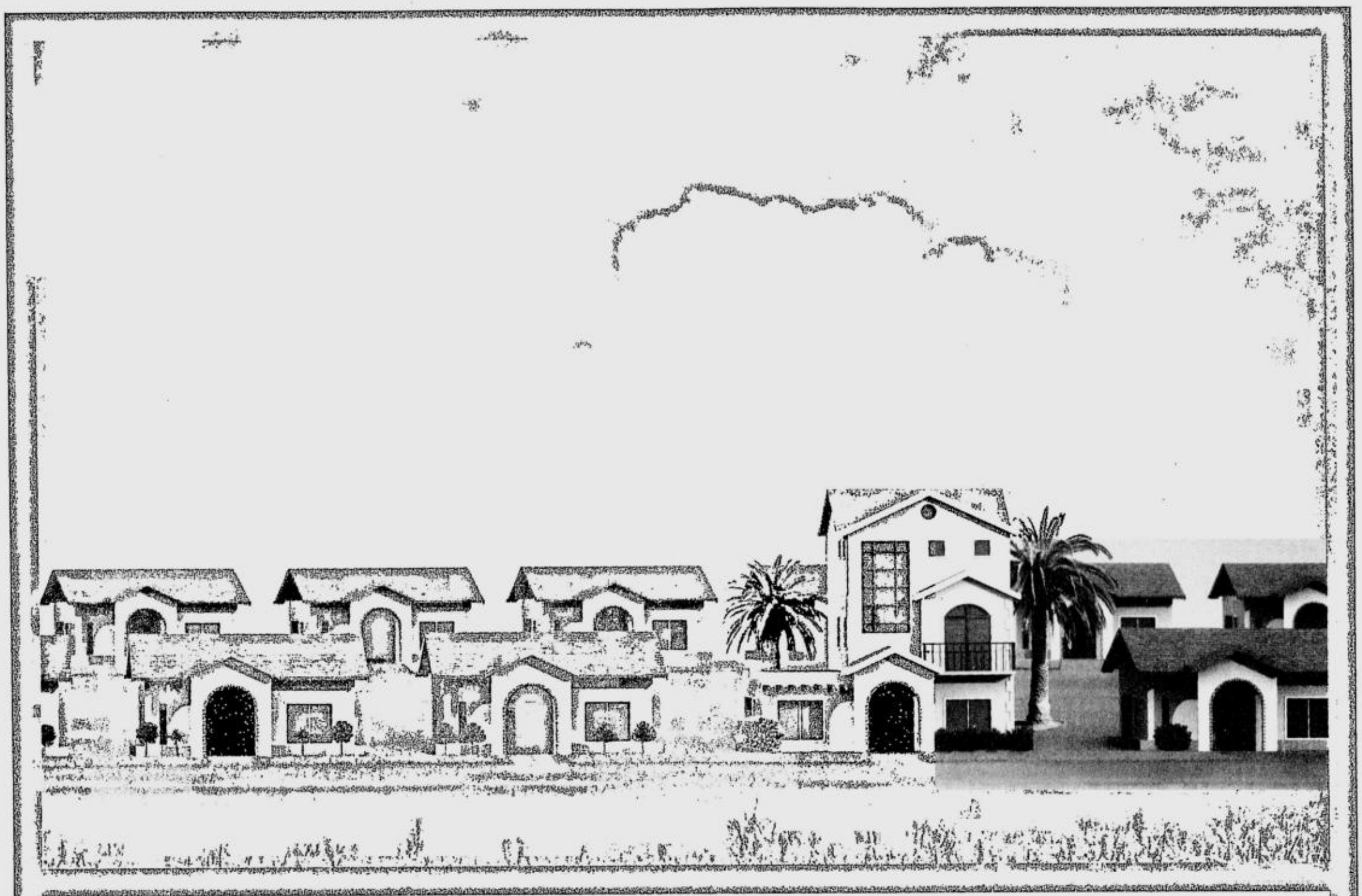
In a "comment" before the high court, lawyer Jose B. Flaminiano, counsel for the heirs of Homer L. Barque—who was declared the true owner of the 34-ha property—took Feliciano to task for pleading his case in a letter to the justices of the high court instead of a formal motion.

To Flaminiano, Feliciano's letter was "inappropriate" because he "ignored the collegial nature of the divisions of the Supreme Court and the court *en banc*" when he asked the tribunal to issue a new ruling even after one of its divisions had already ruled on the case.

Flaminiano said Feliciano had, in effect, "used the back door, as it were, as a former member of the Supreme Court to gain extraordinary or special favors for his clients."

Feliciano, in a letter dated July 19 to Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and the other Supreme Court justices, asked that the tribunal, sitting *en banc*, "consider and accept the case, whether on referral by the Special First Division or on its own determination."

This after the First Division on Dec. 12, 2005, upheld the Court of Appeals' ruling canceling the Manotoks' title over the property located behind Ayala Heights and declaring the Barque title "genuine, authentic and existing."



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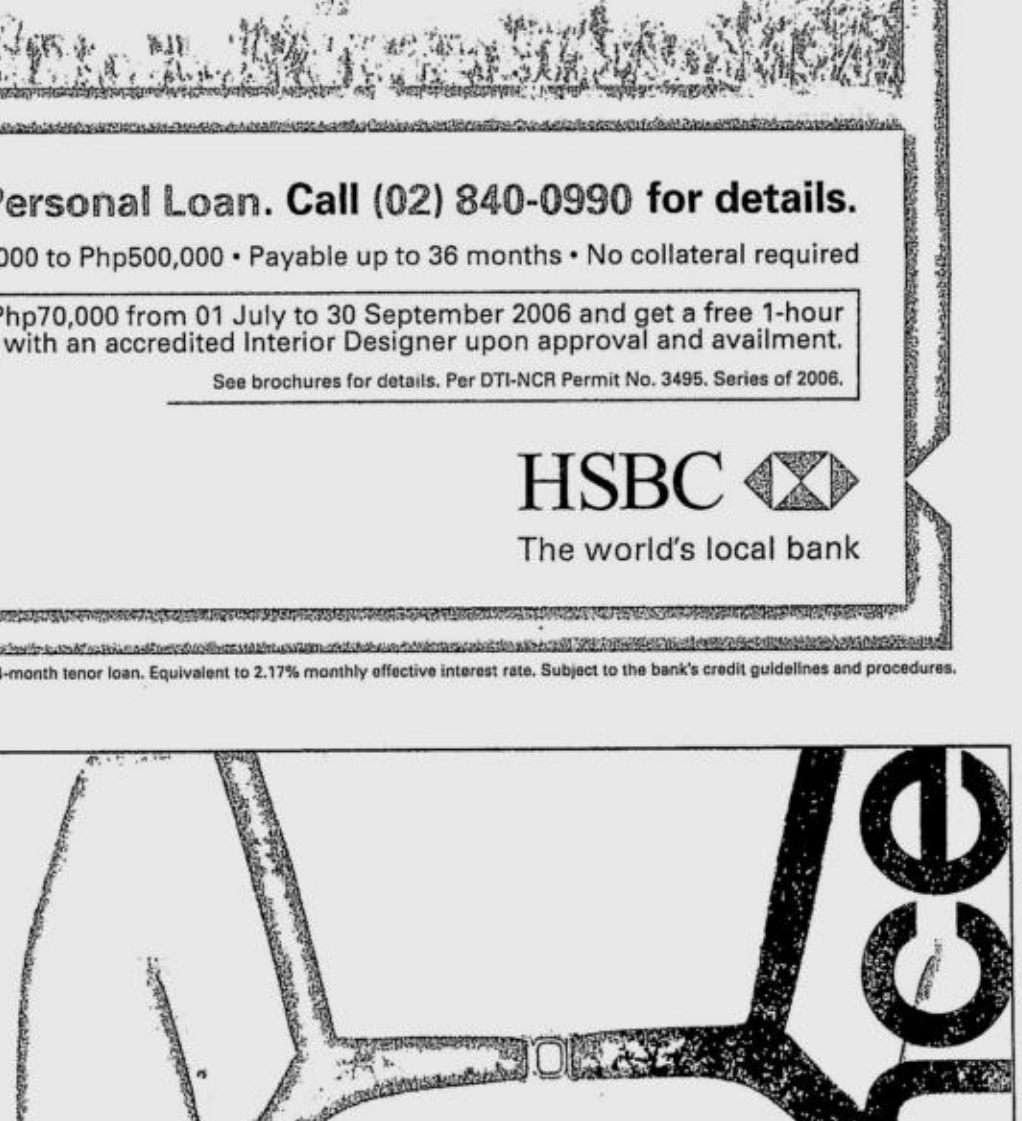

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PROTEST OF THE INNOCENTS RCM ZAMORA

Muslim women and children hold a protest in front of the Israeli Embassy in Makati to protest Israeli military incursions into Lebanon which have killed at least 1,000, mostly civilians, including women and children. Police have tightened security around the embassy.

GMA defies docs again

AS IF TO SHOW SHE WAS FIT as fiddle, President Macapagal-Arroyo is resuming her backbreaking schedule this week by going on a four-day, three-city tour this week, nearly two weeks after checking out of a private hospital.

"As far as we are concerned, the President's health is a non-issue," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye in the face of mounting speculation that the President was suffering from an ailment more serious than what her doctors have declared.

The President will go to Dagupan City this morning for the groundbreaking ceremony for the Pantal Bridge. She will proceed to the Clark Special Economic Zone in Pampanga for lunch to preside over the Flood Summit where she is expected to stay overnight.

On Thursday morning, the President will grace the inauguration of the IRMC call center at the industrial park inside the economic zone.

The President will fly to Cebu on Friday for the two-day Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) Business Advisory Council (Abac) conference where she will make a speech.

Late last month, the President was advised by her doctors to easy up on her schedule and limit her engagements to between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. everyday inside the Palace for two weeks in order to aid her recovery from the flu. *Gil Cabacungan*

Jusmag eviction: Ex-general holding out for compensation

By Dona Pazzibugan

FORMER AIR FORCE MAJ. GEN. Melchor Rosales is the last general standing among the scores of "over-staying" former military and police officials who have been evicted from the Joint United States Military Advisory Group (Jusmag) compound in Fort Bonifacio.

As of yesterday, Rosales, who is now an interior undersecretary, and Raymundo Jarque, a former Army brigadier general, were still in their Jusmag quarters even as 79 other former top military officials have been evicted either voluntarily or by force in the past few days.

Army officials are said to be trying to see how Rosales could be made to leave, though a spokesperson said his eviction was inevitable.

Rosales, who retired from military service in 2001, has demanded that he first be reimbursed for the expenses he incurred in rebuilding his quarters after a fire several years ago.

Army officials are still checking its records for a report of the fire.

"Assuming it did occur, does it make his case any different from those who spent a good amount of money to make their quarters livable [but] eventually voluntarily vacated the house?" said Army spokesperson Maj. Ernesto Torres Jr.

He said the Office of the Army Judge Advocate, the legal adviser to the Army chief, has recommended that Rosales be evicted.

He said negotiations with Rosales

ROSALES

were going on.

Rosales yesterday denied that he wanted to stay on at his Jusmag quarters but confirmed that he wanted compensation.

He said the house burned down completely in 1992 and he built a new one on the property in 1994.

"I can vacate but what about my compensation?" he said.

Rosales said he had discussed the issue with Army Commanding General Hermogenes Esperon and the latter had told him his request for compensation would be considered.

He denied that he wanted to stay on in the property. In fact, he said he has been packing his things for the past two weeks and was looking for an apartment.

Jarque, who in 1995 became the highest military official to defect to the communist New People's Army, meanwhile asked for a reprieve of "a few days" until his bed-ridden wife is well enough to be transferred.

In 2001, or six years after he defected to the NPA, Jarque became a consultant of the state-owned Philippine National Oil Co.

Jarque is occupying the quarters of his son, the late Army Capt. Jose Rene Jarque, who died last year but had resigned from the service in 2000.

A former Armed Forces chief, Benjamin Defensor, held out from vacating his Jusmag quarters but gave it up last Monday.

After harassing Army officers and soldiers and "moving heaven and earth" to get an extension, Defensor, a brother of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago and now ambassador-at-large for terrorism, reluctantly turned over the keys to his quarters before noon last Monday.

Had he not voluntarily moved out, Army soldiers who had had enough of his verbal abuse were just about ready to bodily carry him off, according to a member of the eviction team.

With Rosales and Jarque standing in the way, the Army cannot declare it has fully regained control of the 40-hectare Jusmag compound 15 years after a group of top military and police officials laid claim to it.

The Army has already evicted the families of 79 former military officials who continued to occupy the Jusmag quarters after they had either retired, resigned or died. Jusmag has a total of 106 units.

Under AFP regulations, military personnel are required to vacate their quarters within 60 days after retirement. *With a report from Norman Bordadora*

Corrections

IN THE AUG. 5 ISSUE, a story published on Page A3—"I lived in an orphanage when I was younger"—misstated the name of the Campaigns and Grey chair. The agency's chair is Yoly Ong—not Ang.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 6 ISSUE, a story published on Page A9—"Abenojar bares plan to scale Everest again sans oxygen"—misstated that Katmandu is in Tibet. Katmandu is the capital of Nepal.

* * *

IN THE AUG. 7 ISSUE, a caption of a front-page infographic of the Mayon Volcano misstated that the 8-km radius around the summit is the permanent danger zone. The 6-km radius is the permanent danger zone, while the 8-km radius is the extended danger zone.

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Aug. 10 (Thursday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm The Latest Time Record System Has Finally Arrived! by DAVID LINK MLA. CORP; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm High Impact Presentation by GAKKEN; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Business Can Be Simple by CANON MKTG.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Asset Tracking - A Better Solution by CHASE TECHNOLOGIES
Aug. 11 (Friday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Nestle Food Services Your Total Office Solutions Provider by PHIL. VENDING; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm eCommerce Best SME Gateway Application by MANNASOFT; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Microphone Seminar by EVI PHILS.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Stop Seeing the World in Black & White by UBIX
Aug. 12 (Saturday) Seminar Room 1: 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Wireless Presentation by MICRODATA; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Interactive World of Business Touch Screen Board for Effective Product Presentation by QUALIPLUS INT'L.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Now & Beyond Product Roadmap by ASIANTECH
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 9): 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Digidesign Pro tools System by CHALLENGE SYSTEM; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Sound Solutions by AUDIO BY DESIGN; 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Philippe Cables & Sound Accessories 2006 by PHILIPPE GADGET & ACCESSORIES, INC.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm NEAT MOBILE INC
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 10): 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm VOIP c/o U.S. COMMERCIAL SERVICE; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Micro Wireless Microphone System by MICROACOUSTIC; 3:00 pm - 4:45 pm Sennheiser by STAGE CRAFT INT'L.; 4:00 pm - 4:45 pm Portable Roofing System by FORSC INC. INK
Seminar Room 3 (Aug. 11): 1:00 pm - 1:45 pm Revenue Channels for Telcos Mera Systems; 2:00 pm - 2:45 pm Project Studio & DAW Ideas by FORERUNNER TECHNOLOGIES; 3:00 pm - 3:45 pm Digidesign Pro-tools System by CHALLENGE SYSTEM
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Aug. 10 (Thursday) 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, 5:00 pm - 8:00 pm Mini-concert by DYNA Music Artists
Aug. 11 (Friday) 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm Mini-concert by XAX Music Artists
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Aug 11 (Fri.) 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Understanding Signal Processing in a DAW System; 3:30 pm - 5:30 pm Digital Platform In Sound System Integration
Aug 12 (Sat.) 1:00 pm - 2:30 pm Acoustical Measurements; 2:30 pm - 4:00 pm Application of Acoustical Measurements in Sound System Design
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Lawyers want evidence from Eki Cardenas house quashed

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE LAWYERS OF THE MAGDALO GROUP OF rebel military officers who staged the Oakwood mutiny in 2003 will ask the court to dismiss evidence presented at their trial by the prosecution as proof the accused were involved in an armed uprising against the government.

Lawyer Roel Pulido said he and co-counsel Rene Saguisag will ask the Makati City court hearing the coup d'etat charges against their clients to reject the firearms, ammunition, grenades, flags, armbands and backpacks submitted by the prosecution on the grounds the evidence was gathered illegally.

"We don't think it is admissible because it is in violation of the constitutional rights of the accused and of the occupant and owner of the house. According to the [Bill of Rights], any evidence obtained in violation of the right to privacy, or evidence obtained as part of an illegal search, is inadmissible in any proceeding for whatever purpose," Pulido said.

The evidence was seized from the residence of Ramon "Eki" Cardenas, a former aide of deposed President Joseph Estrada, hours after the rebel officers agreed to return to barracks following their nearly 24-hour takeover of the Oakwood Premier apartment-hotel in Makati City on July 27, 2003.

On the strength of a search warrant, National Bureau of Investigation and police Criminal Investigation and Detection Group personnel swooped down on Cardenas' house in Dasmariñas Village, Makati, before dawn on July 28, 2003.

Separate case

The seized items were used by the Department of Justice to nail Cardenas and 31 junior officers on coup d'etat charges. Judge Oscar Pimentel of Makati Regional Trial Court Branch 148 is hearing the separate cases filed against Cardenas and the officers.

At yesterday's hearing for the officers, prosecution witness Gregorio Zuñiga Jr., an NBI supervising agent, narrated how his team conducted the raid and made an inventory of the items seized.

While the same pieces of evidence had been presented in the same court in Cardenas' trial, Pulido said the court should not have accepted it against his clients, noting irregularities in the way they were obtained and handled.

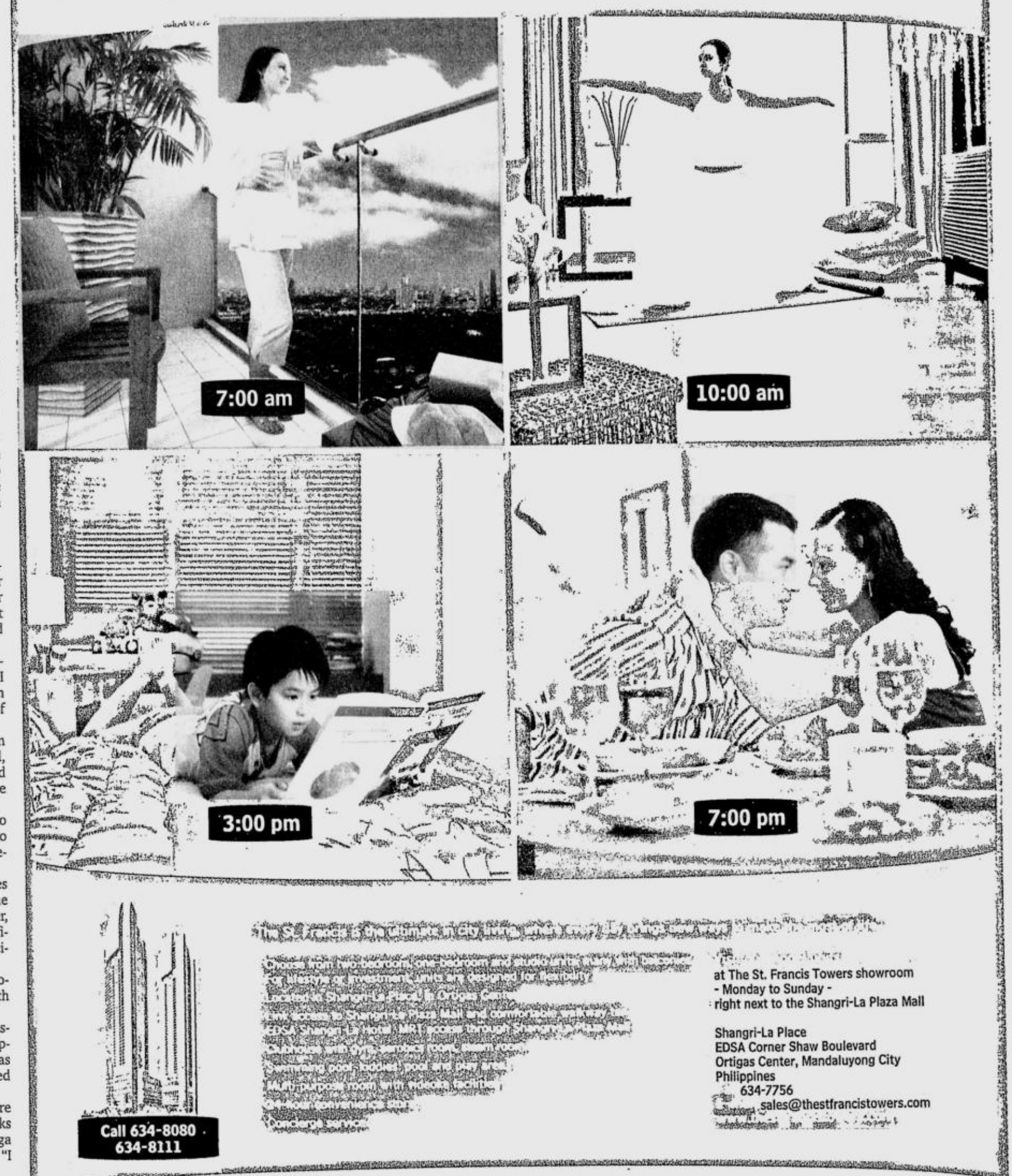
"I think it is important for us lawyers to make a point and teach law enforcers how to properly conduct a search and only seize materials that are authorized by law," Pulido said.

Under the law, the owner of the premises being searched should sign a receipt for the items seized. In the absence of the owner, Pulido said, the signature of a barangay official would do. But the raiding team had neither, he said.

He also said Zuñiga's handwritten inventory of the items seized was not consistent with what was presented in court.

While the inventory listed two boxes of assorted flags, only one box containing Philippine and the rebels' own red flags was brought to court. A second box contained red armbands.

While the inventory said 30 bags were seized, only 27 duffel bags and backpacks were submitted to the court. Asked by Ladaga where the three bags went, Zuñiga replied: "I do not know."



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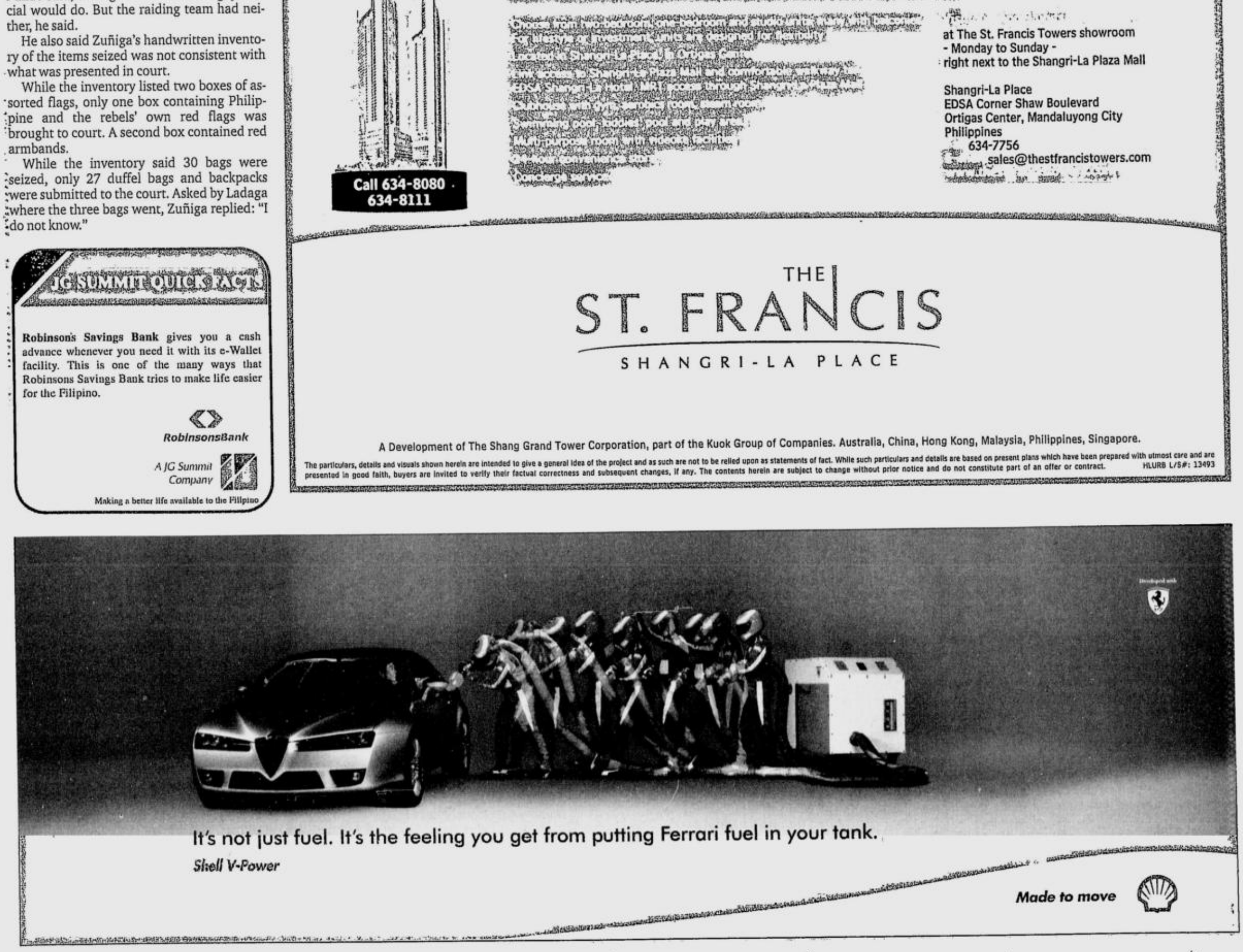

Vicious gossip, not war, sends OFW home

By Nikko Dizon

MELRIMA MACAYANAN'S WORST fear was not the raging war in Lebanon but losing her job as a maid.

She said she was still having nightmares about her departure from Beirut after she became a victim of vicious gossip—not of the deadly Israeli bombing—from compatriots jealous of her supposedly fabulous salary of $300 a month.

Not too many Filipino housemaids earn that much there. Many are happy with a monthly wage of $150 to $200, according to returnees interviewed by the INQUIRER.

"I had no plans of going home," said Macayanan, who arrived yesterday on a mercy flight organized by the US-funded International Organization for Migration for 446 overseas Filipino workers from Lebanon.

Macayanan, 28, a fair and attractive mother of one, sat quietly at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport's arrival area, seemingly contemplating her fate.

She was kicked out of the house by her Lebanese employer after somebody had told him that she was spreading rumors that he wanted to rape her.

"It wasn't true," Macayanan said, incredulous at the accusation. Macayanan believed it was a fellow Filipino who told her employer the lie. She suspected she became an object of envy because the family she worked for was kind and gave her a good wage unfailingly, and on time.

The reluctant evacuee mirrored the dilemma of most Filipinos in Lebanon.

Many of the more than 30,000 OFWs in Lebanon do not wish to return to the Philippines despite pleas from President Macapagal-Arroyo that they come home in the face of the intensifying war in Lebanon.

They are apprehensive about going back to the poverty they had attempted to flee and the lack of opportunities in their homeland.

"My assessment, to be very frank about it is, at this point, at this level of the fighting, more would elect to stay," said Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. "Majority of them still want to stay."

Conejos, who was on hand for the arrival of the third IOM flight, could not give an estimate on how many Filipinos wanted to remain in Lebanon. The best indicator is the small number of those who had returned home, around 3,000.

"Look, we are now entering the fourth week of war and how many have we brought back? It's not because we are wanting in resources but because we are wanting in OFWs who want to come home," Conejos said.

He said relocation sites in the Lebanese capital of Beirut and Damascus in Syria were practically empty.

Teams from the Philippine Embassy and labor office in Beirut continued to conduct house-to-house searches for Filipinos to inform them of the President's directive for a mandatory evacuation, he said. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Volt Contreras*

Senate probe into Owwa fund use irks Palace executives

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SENATE'S INVESTIGATION of the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa) fund and the lack of financial help to Filipinos stranded in Lebanon has touched a raw nerve among Malacañang officials.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. blew his top when asked to comment on criticisms that the government had been penny-pinching in its evacuation efforts in Lebanon by spending only $3 million so far when it has nearly $140 million in Owwa funds.

"Why you are so focused on (putting a) price tag on this? I think the focus should be that OFWs are being repatriated from Beirut to Damascus and that we are bringing them back continuously to the Philippines," Conejos said in his regular briefing in Malacañang.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that Congress "should put all things in their proper place," stressing that the investigations should be done only after the urgent evacuation of Filipinos had been completed.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye sounded impatient.

"The clarification made by the Commission on Audit should be enough to douse all speculations regarding the issue of Owwa funds. We have a job to do and we need all hands on deck, including all our political leaders," said Bunye in a statement.

The Senate hearing on Monday, which was snubbed by Malacañang officials, revealed that P530 million in Owwa funds had been diverted to Medicare in 2005 and P459 million to the Smokey Mountain reclamation project in 1995.

Conejos was particularly peeved at charges that the evacuation effort had been hampered by the lack of funds due to the government's failure to account for the P7.1 billion Owwa fund, a money pool built from the $25 contribution of each OFW.

"The Owwa fund was not just built for this crisis, for the evacuation. Evacuation is just one of the benefits of the members of Owwa; they also get insurance health benefits," said Conejos.

"It's not a drop in the bucket, it's a continuing thing. You are talking as if it is the end of the day. It is still a continuing operation up to this time. We have spent so much and we will continue to spend until the crisis is over," said Conejos, taking note of the P1 billion in funds President Macapagal-Arroyo had pledged for the Middle East crisis.

GMA urges Mideast peace

From page A1

British Prime Minister Tony Blair said a UN resolution could be clinched soon but it would not include a demand for an Israeli pullout as Lebanon wants.

Also on Monday, the office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees said that Israel's onslaught in Lebanon was endangering efforts to help hundreds of thousands of people who had fled their homes in the face of the offensive.

The UNHCR said it needed "humanitarian space to work in." The UNHCR said that on Sunday it had sent a convoy of 15 trucks carrying supplies to the isolated port of Tyre in south Lebanon, the region that is bearing the brunt of the Israeli offensive.

With Manila set to host the 12th Asean summit in Cebu in December, Ms Arroyo said the theme of the meeting was "one caring and sharing community." In keeping with this, Ms Arroyo vowed that Asean would "work for the protection of the rights of migrant workers in all corners of the earth."

Asia has many workers in the Middle East, including 2 million Filipinos, more than 30,000 of whom work in Lebanon, the President said.

"In this time of crisis, we will share with our Asean neighbors our government apparatus," Ms Arroyo said. "It keeps track of our overseas workers and takes care of their needs."

She said her administration had been able to move out thousands of Filipinos "to relative safety from the most harmful areas of south Lebanon." Some 3,000 OFWs had been flown back to the Philippines.

Asean will also push for greater cooperation in energy security as well as a convention on counterterrorism so as to "advance teamwork in the fight against evil," according to the President.

Mandatory evacuation

Last week, Ms Arroyo ordered the mandatory evacuation of all Filipinos from Lebanon over the next two weeks.

After the Israeli bombing on Friday of the main highway forced back to Beirut a Filipino convoy on its way to Damascus, Syria, for the flight to the Philippines, the President ordered an evacuation by sea.

About 500 OFWs trapped in war-torn Lebanon will be moved out simultaneously in two batches using sea routes from Beirut to Cyprus, and from Beirut to Syria, before the end of the week, Vice President Noli de Castro and Foreign Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Esteban Conejos Jr. said after a meeting Monday night with Greek shipping magnate Antoniou Antonious.

Antonious has offered ships to ferry OFWs from Beirut to Cyprus for free. The owner of the Dubai-based Olympic Tankers Co. Inc. will fly to Greece on Wednesday to make arrangements for the ships needed.

Small ships needed

He told De Castro that his staff in Greece had reported to him that it would be impossible to hire passenger ships, either regular or chartered, nowadays since it was the peak season for tourists there.

As such, Antonious would have to get smaller passenger ships in Greece that can ferry at least 250 OFWs on each voyage instead of just one big passenger ship that could ferry 2,000 OFWs in a single trip as he had earlier planned.

He said the use of smaller ships was the most feasible because the evacuation from Beirut was taking place in batches.

Conejos said the Department of Foreign Affairs was allowing Antonious to directly coordinate his effort with Philippine Ambassador to Greece Rigoberto Tiglao.

Antonious asked De Castro and Conejos to give him at least one week to coordinate his effort with the Greek shipowners.

The Cypriot government has told the Philippine government that it was allowing the entry of OFWs by ship only for transit, meaning they should be flown out of Cyprus by plane immediately upon the ships' arrival there.

De Castro, presidential adviser on the OFWs and head of Task Force Lebanon, said that Tiglao was already working on the ships' clearances and documentation with the Cypriot government.

Gulf Air to fly 1,000 OFWs

He said that the government of Bahrain had approved the dispatch of Gulf Air planes to Cyprus to fly 1,000 OFWs there to Manama.

In Manama, the OFWs will be allowed to stay in a Philippine school for a maximum of seven days while the Philippine government books their commercial flights back to Manila.

Conejos said the Geneva-based International Organization for Migration had also agreed to send aircraft to Cyprus.

Antonious said he was also going to Cyprus to personally oversee the arrival of OFWs and that he was sending his son, Capt. Labby Antonious, to take charge of the OFW embarkation in Beirut.

"It should be a well-coordinated effort with the Manila government to make sure that all OFWs who would arrive there by sea would be immediately flown out of Cyprus. The penalty is very high for every runaway there, and I will have to pay for that, being the ones who hire the ships," he said.

De Castro assured Antonious that the Philippine government would make sure that no OFW would run away in Cyprus.

Test runs

Conejos asked Antonious to send at least one small ship this week to Beirut to ferry 250 OFWs to test the Beirut-Cyprus sea route.

He said a similar move would be made for the Beirut-Turkey route.

"We'll try to evacuate at least 250 Filipinos using this route even just for once this week *para* next time *alam na natin ang gagawin natin*," Conejos said.

Palace-Senate ties worsen; more execs snub hearings

From page A1

when PRC Chair Leonor Tripon-Rosero and PRC Commissioners Renato Valdecantos and Avelina de la Rea skipped the first hearing on the leakage.

Lawyer Elfren Meneses Jr. of the National Bureau of Investigation and engineer William Malitao of the Commission on Higher Education also failed to show up.

Same explanation

Interestingly, these five officials sent letters to Biazon citing the same explanation for their absence: The invitation did not refer to any possible needed statute that prompted the inquiry and did not contain questions on the issue.

"Somebody dictated to the executive officials what to write. I think they were provided a *codigo*... Talk about dictatorship," Biazon said, adding: "This is an echo of the declaration of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita."

The inquiry by Biazon's committee was an offshoot of the resolutions filed by Gordon and Sen. Pia Cayetano who wanted the Senate to look into the alleged leakage of test questions to some nursing students who took the board exams on June 11 and 12 in several parts of the country.

Subpoena

The snub came a day after Owwa chief Marianito Roque, Labor Secretary Arturo Brion, Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos, Undersecretary Ricardo Blancaflor and Philippine Overseas Employment Administration chief Rosalinda Baldoz skipped the labor committee's second hearing on the Owwa fund on Monday.

Ermita cited the committee's failure to cite the statute and state the questions in its invitation as the reason for the officials' nonappearance in the first hearing last week.

After Sen. Jinggoy Estrada wrote back providing a list of proposed bills related to the inquiry and issued subpoenas, the officials skipped anew the second hearing, saying he had to provide advance questions.

In both instances, Ermita cited the Supreme Court ruling on the gag order, Executive Order No. 464, as the basis for their arguments in ignoring the Senate invitations.

In view of the snub, the senators went on a caucus Monday night and reached a consensus to refer the matter to their legal department.

"We just want to make sure [how to deal with this] because we believe that they will do this again and again, and we will never yield our constitutional right [to call officials to hearings]," Villar told reporters at the plenary hall.

Clearer interpretation

Sen. Panfilo Lacson explained that the senators wanted to get a clearer interpretation of the Supreme Court ruling on EO 464, so that they could ask the no-shows to give the reason they should not be cited in contempt.

The Supreme Court upheld on April 21 the right of lawmakers to compel the appearance of executive branch officials at congressional inquiries, saying that the issue involving EO 464 pertained not only to Congress' right to know but also the people's right to take part in government affairs.

But the tribunal declared constitutional President Macapagal-Arroyo's right to ban executive officials from appearing during the question hour in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

"The other senators don't want to be too confrontational. So, before a consensus is made by the senators to either show cause or issue a warrant of arrest, we need to have a clear interpretation of the Supreme Court ruling on EO 464," Lacson said.

What about lower-ranked?

Specifically, the senators wanted to know if the officials who could be provided with advance questions also included those in the lower rungs of the bureaucracy.

"Are all officials down to the rank of Sgt. Vidal Doble considered an official of the executive branch?" Lacson said, referring to an alleged key player in the "Hello Garci" wiretapping scandal.

"The Constitution is very clear that only Cabinet officials can be furnished advance questions. And who can invoke executive privilege?"

"Let us first, with finality, resolve the issue of the constitutionality of their continued refusal," Biazon added.

Suspension of inquiry

After conducting two hearings on the status of the Owwa fund, Estrada, chair of the labor committee, said he was suspending the inquiry for now.

"I have decided to temporarily stop the hearings until after the Senate legal department has resolved the issue and until after the war in Lebanon has stopped," he said.

The inquiry was an offshoot of Ambassador Al Francis Bichara's complaint of lack of funds to evacuate workers from Lebanon. Bichara is the country's envoy to Lebanon. Commission on Audit officials, however, said that the Owwa funds amounting to P7.1 billion were intact.

Int'l group links military to killings

From page A1

sions to the United Nations.

"Ours will be just to add to these previous reports," De Ceukelaire said.

He said there might be difficulty in pinning down Palparan in court, but added that the principle of command responsibility should make the general liable.

Palparan, who has been tagged the "butcher" of leftist activists, is commander of the Army's 7th Infantry Division.

De Ceukelaire said that in Europe, he and his colleagues had noticed that "compared to a year ago, the image of the Philippines has changed because of the campaign of killings and repression."

Jobs at stake

"Considering that in just one year the image has changed, it would take just a little time before there is enough international pressure [against the political killings]," he said.

In another move aimed at countering criticism that the Philippine National Police was not doing enough, PNP Director General Calderon said field commanders would lose their jobs if they failed to, among others, solve the political killings in their areas.

Calderon said he would summon PNP regional directors to brief him on the progress of the investigations.

Asked what kind of pressure would be brought to bear on the field officers, he said: "Their positions will be at stake. I will judge them on their performance. If they cannot deliver what I'm asking them to deliver, if they cannot perform a simple task I will ask of them, they have no business being there."

"There are a lot of junior officers volunteering for positions," he said.

But Calderon quickly clarified that he would not judge his men solely on their ability to solve the killings. He said their performance on the issue would form part of the evaluation.

More than 200 activists have been murdered since President Macapagal-Arroyo assumed office in 2001, according to independent research by the INQUIRER. The human rights group Karapatan put the number at more than 700, and the PNP at more than 100.

Police claimed to have solved two cases days after Ms Arroyo set a 10-week deadline for the PNP to arrest the suspects in at least 10 cases.

Carrot and stick

It may be necessary to employ the carrot-and-stick approach on certain officers, Calderon said.

He said he had set quotas for the regional directors to achieve in the campaign against criminality, insurgency and terrorism.

"You cannot just tell them, 'Please do this.' We need to pound on our men, to give them a quota. The carrot-and-stick [policy] is OK," he said.

Critics have noted that among the typical government responses to the issue was to immediately clear its personnel and throw the burden of producing witnesses to the public.

Police have repeatedly said the cases had bogged down because neither the witnesses nor the victims' kin were cooperating.

But Calderon said he was warning senior officers in the countryside that many other officers could readily fill up posts declared vacant.

On the other hand, he said, he did not want to see "fall guys, false reports and drama."

He said accusations that police were engaged in a cover-up of or complicity in the murders might have an effect on cops in the field.

CPP/NPA

But according to a military digest provided by the Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista ng Pilipinas (PDSP) headed by National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales, the Communist Party of the Philippines and its armed wing, the New People's Army, were responsible for most of the killings.

The special report sent to Gonzales' office showed that the CPP/NPA conducted 1,130 operations that resulted in the killing of 1,227 people from 2000 to May 2006, and "the majority of their victims were civilians."

It showed that the victims included 384 soldiers, policemen and intelligence operatives and 843 civilians.

"Only 320 of the killings could be considered in furtherance of Party objectives, the targets being suspected government informants or rebel returnees," the PDSP said in explaining the document.

It added: "The liquidations are part of the special tactical operations of the [CPP] against people it considered a hindrance to the movement.

"The operations were carried out by the Special Armed Partisan Unit, an NPA group usually based in the countryside but which is sometimes deployed in urban areas."

The PDSP said the document showed that most of the killings occurred in CPP/NPA-infested regions such as Bicol, Central Luzon, Southern Mindanao, Eastern Visayas, Southern Tagalog and Caraga, in that order.

"The government's belief that some of the victims of the recent series of slayings were victims of a CPP purge was bolstered after the military found out that the CPP leadership ordered purging operations against suspected infiltrators," the PDSP said.

It said the order was issued on April 7.

A spokesperson for the PDSP, Peping Lugay, told the INQUIRER that Gonzales was abroad and unavailable for an interview regarding the contents of the military document. *With a report from Luige A. del Puerto*

Gov't joins 'kapihan' circuit

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG SPIN doctors have invaded the coffee shop circuit dominated by professional journalists and columnists by coming up with their own breakfast forum to better influence the public mind.

Cerge Remonde, head of the Government Mass Media Group (GMMG), said the forum, which would be backed by the three government-owned broadcast stations NBN-4, RPN-9 and IBC-13, along with the largest radio network Radyo ng Bayan and the Philippine Information Agency would be used to elaborate on key government issues—from charter change to the super region development strategy.

"We might even invite the President to be our guest one of these days," said Remonde shortly after closing the first GMMG-sponsored Kapihan at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

He denied that the breakfast forum was redundant considering that the government already had several options to send its messages to the public—from regular press conferences to sound bites and press statements to the President's regular roundtable forum in the Palace.

"It's a different way to send our message," Remonde said.

White paper gets SC justices' goat

By Armand N. Nocum

THE SUPREME COURT, SITTING en banc, has passed a resolution clearing Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban and five other justices of accusations contained in an unsigned white paper from a fictitious person that they have been receiving first class airline tickets as gifts and are on the payroll of a business tycoon.

In a five-page resolution dated Aug. 1, the court said it will no longer pursue its investigation on the issue raised by a person identifiying himself as Jose Tinio in an unsigned letter dated July 12 since the latter appeared to be a "fictitious person."

In the letter, Tinio who claims to be residing in 1840 E. Rodriguez Sr. Ave., quoted a businessman as saying his buddies at the Manila Golf Club that all the Supreme Court justices have a price.

But the court said a committee it created to investigate the matter found that there was no Tinio residing in the given address. The businessman, the SC said, also wrote the justices and denied making such a statement to anyone.

Thus, although the court had "every intention of investigating this matter further in order that the author or authors of such utterly baseless charges" can be dealt with, the fictitious nature of the writer leaves the court "no recourse but to consider the instant matter closed and terminated," the high court said.

"Nevertheless, let this irresponsible person or persons be warned that the court shall not hesitate to take the necessary steps to protect the integrity and dignity of the Philippine judiciary when so warranted," the court said in a resolution signed by Ma. Luisa D. Villarama.

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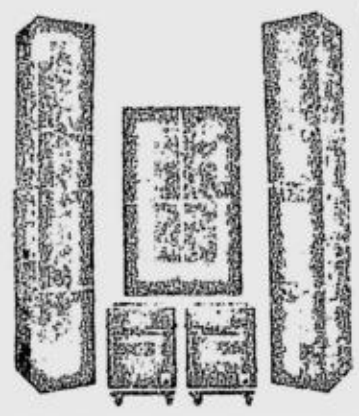

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House votes 54-24 to junk 7 of 8 impeach ...

From page A1

and White Movement and endorsed by Liberal Party congressmen on the morning of July 27.

The committee said the first seven complaints were "prohibited" because they were filed within the one-year constitutional ban on the filing of an impeachment complaint against the President.

"There are 54 in favor of the motion and there are 24 against. That being the sense of the committee, the motion is carried," Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong, the committee chair, declared at the packed Rolando Andaya Hall of the House of Representatives.

Ban ended on July 26

The majority agreed with Albay Rep. Edcel Lagman's view that the one-year ban ended immediately after 4:20 p.m. on July 26. The first seven complaints were filed from June 26 to July 26.

. Lagman, a justice committee vice chair, said the ban ended on the afternoon of July 26 because, according to him, that was the time last year when the justice committee received the impeachment complaint of lawyer Oliver Lozano.

Citing a Supreme Court ruling, Lagman explained that the one-year ban took effect once the process of "initiating" an impeachment complaint—filing and referral to the justice committee—was completed.

"Accordingly, it is this eighth complaint for impeachment which should be the one to be subjected by the committee on justice to an initial determination whether it is sufficient in form and substance pursuant (to the impeachment rules) of Congress," Lagman said.

Filed prematurely

"In this connection, the first seven complaints for impeachment should be jettisoned as prohibited complaints for having been filed prematurely within the one-year ban," he said.

Ms Arroyo faced a similar move to oust her last year but survived after the complaints were thrown out by the House.

The opposition needs a majority vote in the committee, which is dominated by Arroyo allies, to get an impeachment complaint tabled at the House of Representatives.

77 votes needed

At least 77 votes, one-third of the 232-member House, are needed to send the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate for trial.

Ms Arroyo, who has maintained she did nothing illegal, asked the legislators during her annual State of the Nation Address last month to move on.

No Filipino leader has ever been removed through impeachment, though a military-backed popular revolt ended the rule of Ms Arroyo's predecessor, Joseph Estrada, in January 2001 shortly after he was impeached for alleged corruption.

Estrada is now under house arrest and standing trial for plunder.

TENSION IN THE HOUSE: Rep. Benasing Macarambong (second from right) points a finger at Rep. Rodolfo Plaza (left with back to camera) during the justice committee hearing on the impeachment complaint against President Arroyo. Tensions flared over the opposition demand for congressmen linked to the fertilizer fund scam to inhibit themselves from the impeachment proceedings. RAFFY LERMA

Consolidate signatories

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and citizen complainants said they would move that the complainants in the dismissed complaints be allowed to sign up for the eighth complaint.

"We anticipated this. That they would use a technicality and choose only one. But this will not weaken the case since the complaints are similar. They only differed in the personalities and number of complainants," Escudero said after the committee hearing.

"In accordance with the rules, we will proceed to determine the form and substance but we will always ask that we be allowed to present our evidence before they make their decisions," he said.

"That is due process. That we are allowed to present evidence so that they'll have a basis for their decision," he added.

Hearing today

Escudero said the hearing would resume at 1 p.m. today at the House plenary hall to accommodate the large crowd expected to watch the proceedings.

Artist Leah Navarro of the Black and White Movement, one of the complainants, said that her group would continue to press for the President's impeachment despite the initial victory secured by Ms Arroyo's allies.

"To a lot of people, it wasn't a surprise. They will fight tooth and nail so that this impeachment would never go through the House," Navarro said, referring to proadministration legislators.

"But as citizens of this country who seek redress for injustice, we will not stop also. They want a good fight? We will give them a good fight," she added.

3-hour rowdy debate

The thrashing of the seven complaints came after three hours of lengthy and rowdy debates on rules and procedures which, at one point, saw administration Rep. Benasing Macarambon of Lanao del Sur squaring off with opposition Rep. Rodolfo Plaza of Agusan del Sur.

The two nearly came to blows in the middle of a heated discussion on the House minority's demand for lawmakers who had been linked to the P728-million fertilizer scam to inhibit themselves from the impeachment proceedings, a move which did not sit well with Macarambon and members of the majority.

Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong had to suspend the hearing to pacify the two.

An hour into the hearing, tensions flared when Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez raised two parliamentary inquiries on who should participate in the impeachment committee hearings and whether it should be a voluntary decision on the part of the members to inhibit themselves from the proceedings.

Datumanong had been adamant to give the floor to Golez since it had been agreed upon early on that the agenda of the meeting should take precedence over parliamentary inquiries and even points of order.

GMA son refused to inhibit self

When Golez finally spoke, he called the attention of the committee by reading the March 2006 report of the Commission on Audit, which confirmed that several congressmen, including members of the committee, had benefited from the fertilizer fund.

Datumanong quickly ruled that the committee had "no power" to enforce the inhibition of the members.

Even Pampanga Rep. Mikey Arroyo, the President's son, refused to inhibit himself and voted to junk the first seven complaints.

The congressman was not named as a fund recipient in the COA report but opposition members pointed out that his mother, Ms Arroyo, was the defendant in the impeachment case.

Escudero said that while it was up to each lawmaker to decide whether to inhibit or not, he was "saddened" by the younger Arroyo's decision.

"He should have recused himself from the start. He has a blood relation to the person involved in this impeachment. He just shouldn't have been there. That's weird, man," Navarro said.

Conflict of interest

"When you have conflict of interest, it is in your best interest that you excuse yourself because people might see that you might give a biased opinion or judgment," she said.

Besides Navarro, the other citizen complainants and opposition personalities who attended the hearing yesterday included Nini Quezon-Avanceña, lawyer Homobono Adaza, former Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita "Ging" Deles and retired Gen. Fortunato Abat.

'Circus'

Ms Arroyo's spokesperson Ignacio Bunye criticized the House impeachment proceedings as a "circus" given current efforts to evacuate more than 30,000 people from the erupting Mayon volcano and a similar number of Filipino workers from Lebanon.

"It is sad to note that while the entire nation is in distress ... some of our lawmakers and their allies have the callousness to stage this circus," Bunye said.

"There is nothing but hot air in these hearings that will die a natural death anyway."

The President's allies in the legislature have asserted that the fresh impeachment complaints did not have the necessary number of supporters to gain ground.

With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and AFP

Pinoys busiest ...

From page A1

spent the most time on foreplay but flopped when it came to endurance.

Mexicans came in first in stamina in the bedroom.

On average, South Koreans said they were having sex at least four times a week.

Most faithful

Brazilians topped two categories, with 19 percent saying they had had a threesome, which might help account for them having clocked up the most lovers at 11, according to the internationally published fitness magazine.

Polish and German men were found to be the most faithful, with 62 percent having never cheated on their partner, followed by Australians (60 percent) and Dutchmen (59 percent).

Those Italian men

British men spend—or claim to spend—an average of 17.44 minutes on foreplay per sex session, longer than Australians (17.2 minutes), Germans (16.92 minutes) and Mexicans (16.91 minutes).

But British men last only 18.64 minutes from foreplay to climax, far behind the Mexicans (23.17 minutes) and the Dutch (22.42 minutes).

Sixty percent of Italian men said they made their partner climax every time. *AFP*

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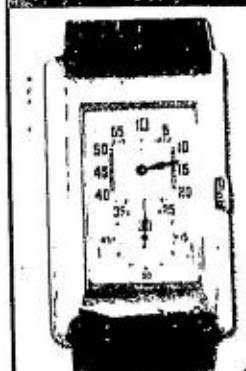

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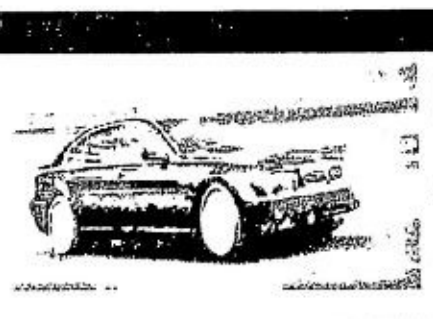

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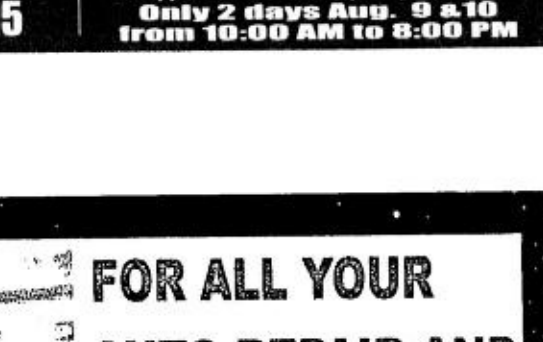

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Gov't urged: Go easy on seeking raise in maids' pay

By Jerome Aning

THE GOVERNMENT PROPOSAL TO RAISE the minimum wage of Filipino domestic workers abroad from $200 to $400 should be carefully studied so as not to affect their competitiveness in the global market, according to recruitment industry leaders.

"Although we are not against the proposal, there should first be a bilateral agreement with the host country for proper compliance," said Salvador Curameng, president of the Association of Service Contractors of the Philippines.

"We must first set the standards. We should be realistic. We shouldn't base the wage on the salary rates of other countries," said Estrelita Hizon, president of the Philippine Association of Mediterranean Agencies Deploying Labours, Inc.

Curameng, Hizon and other members of the Federated Associations of Manpower Exporters said yesterday that countries had different minimum wage laws and working standards so the Philippine government could not just unilaterally increase the "price" of Filipino domestic service.

Meanwhile, Alfredo Palmiery, president of the Society of Hong Kong Accredited Recruiters of the Philippines said the government's "supermaid" program—which plans to upgrade Filipino domestics' skills so they could get better pay—should not focus on training because this was already being done by recruiters.

"Aptitude is not a problem because agencies give training programs to improve the skills of our maids. We train them depending on the employers' needs," Palmiery said.

An area which needed improvement, he noted, was the Filipino's attitude. He said although maids were well-trained and skillful, they were not mentally and emotionally prepared to work abroad.

Palmiery also said that Filipino maids would continue to dominate the global domestic helper market because of their skills and work ethic.

Peping Flores; 91

JOSE "PEPING" P. FLORES OF SORSOGON City died on Monday in Sorsogon City. He was 91.

He is survived by his children and their spouses—Jessie and Grace, Romy and Nanette, Letty and Boy Tablante, Jun and Tess, Eddie and Tita, Choy and Beth, Benny and Nini, Rudy and Cecille, Willy and Ellen, Meg and Jojo Palomo, and Millette and Monching Lapac—grandchildren, great grandchildren, sister Nena Flores Cabrera, sisters-in-law Lloring Paras Flores, Moring Mayor Flores, Sister Margarita Duran, D.C., and Baby Duran Donor, and brother-in-law Roger Duran.

His remains lie at the Licup Hall, Saints Peter and Paul Cathedral, Sorsogon City. Burial will be on Saturday following the memorial service at 1 p.m. and Mass at 2 p.m.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, August 9, 2006
18th Week in Ordinary Time
Teresa Benedicta of the Cross
(Edith Stein)

1st Reading: Jer 31:1-7
Gospel: Matthew 15:21-28

Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. Now a Canaanite woman came from those borders and began to cry out, "Lord, Son of David, have pity on me! My daughter is tormented by a demon." But Jesus did not answer her, not even a word. So his disciples approached him and said, "Send her away: see how she is shouting after us."

Then Jesus said to her, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the nation of Israel."

But the woman was already kneeling before Jesus and said, "Sir, help me!" Jesus answered, "It is not right to take the bread from the children and throw it to the little dogs." The woman replied, "It is true, sir, but even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their master's table." Then Jesus said, "Woman, how great is your faith! Let it be as you wish." And her daughter was healed at that moment.

Commentary

God has loved us with an age-old love and is always restoring us, bringing us back to serve him and be a light to other nations. This time it is a remnant that is delivered. It is the same in ordinary time with us, year after year, needing to hear the cries and stories of the prophets of old and the prophet/God Jesus. Usually it is outsiders who believe when we take Jesus for granted or ignore him, or reject something he teaches. A Canaanite woman pleads on behalf of her child and amazes Jesus in her need—she takes anything he gives: leftovers, what is thrown to the dogs, what others who claim to believe in God don't want.

Who do we plead for? Do we look for leftovers, anything from the hand of God?

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Gagged

EDITORIAL

ON THE PRETEXT OF NEEDING TO AVOID "congestion and [ensuring] orderly proceedings," the House of Representatives has decided to gag the media. Live reporting of the committee on justice's hearings on the impeachment complaints against President Macapagal-Arroyo are now forbidden. Photography will no longer be allowed except by the staff of the Public Relations and Information Department (PRID) of the House, which will certainly take only flattering pictures. Neither will interviews be allowed during the proceedings; the pros and the cons can speak to the media only after the hearing. Since the PRID will closely supervise coverage, the administration expects that only positive and well-managed reports will be broadcast or published—and the President's supporters will have more time to get their act together.

Prominent allies of the President in the House have been blunt about their intention to dismiss any and all charges against her as quickly as they can. After all, they have the numbers and for them, democratic government is about the tyranny of the majority. However, the administration juggernaut cannot go about crushing all opposition in a manner that recalls last year's dismissal.

In last year's proceedings, administration allies hoped that a combination of clever lawyering, sheer numbers and the rag-tag nature of a divided opposition would foster the impression that the system worked. But throwing out the impeachment complaint only hardened the positions of the pros and cons. It pushed the country's slide toward more extreme solutions to the political crisis.

Now, the defenders of the President know they can't afford to be as cocksure as they were last year. They also realize that, same as last year, they cannot afford to have the charges aired to the extent that it begins to fascinate the public.

The lessons of the 2000-2001 impeachment of Joseph Estrada have never been forgotten. Those lessons were that, given unlimited, gavel-to-gavel coverage, the public would flock to their radios and TV sets and become engaged in the impeachment process on a nationwide—even international—basis. Public interest meant that the process could no longer be completely controlled by the politicians. And the ensuing elections in May 2001 proved there were political consequences for those who were believed to have gone against the public opinion on impeachment.

With the present charges—even more so than with last year's different charges—the Arroyo administration can't risk an erosion of its claims that it enjoys popular support. Its allies cannot risk appearing close-minded and heavy-handed in achieving their objectives. The ruling coalition, then, only has a fighting chance if it puts limits on media coverage.

The House leadership can, of course, say it has the authority to handle the media as it pleases. Never mind if the impeachment of Estrada and the hearings on the complaints against Ms Arroyo have already set a precedent for openness and public access. The media and the public can insist as much as they want on the right of the public to information, but obviously information cannot be made available if it carries with it political consequences.

The media and the public have only one choice: comply, or be shut out completely. In the calculations of the House's powers-that-be, it is better to risk criticism over a lack of transparency than to arm the population with audio and video of proceedings whose conclusions have already been prearranged. Limit media exposure, and there can never be any smoking gun. Not even the bang would be recorded. And there would be time to spray air fresheners to eliminate the smell of smoke.

Deliberations on impeachment complaints are always serious business. They deserve the widest and most thorough publicity and access. It is not just the charges against the President that need to be weighed, but how the members of the House weigh those charges. If the House found the charges wanting last year, so too did many Filipinos find the congressmen wanting in how they handled the whole thing. So now, the same congressmen want to do it faster, but without being put under public scrutiny. And they continue to call themselves public servants?

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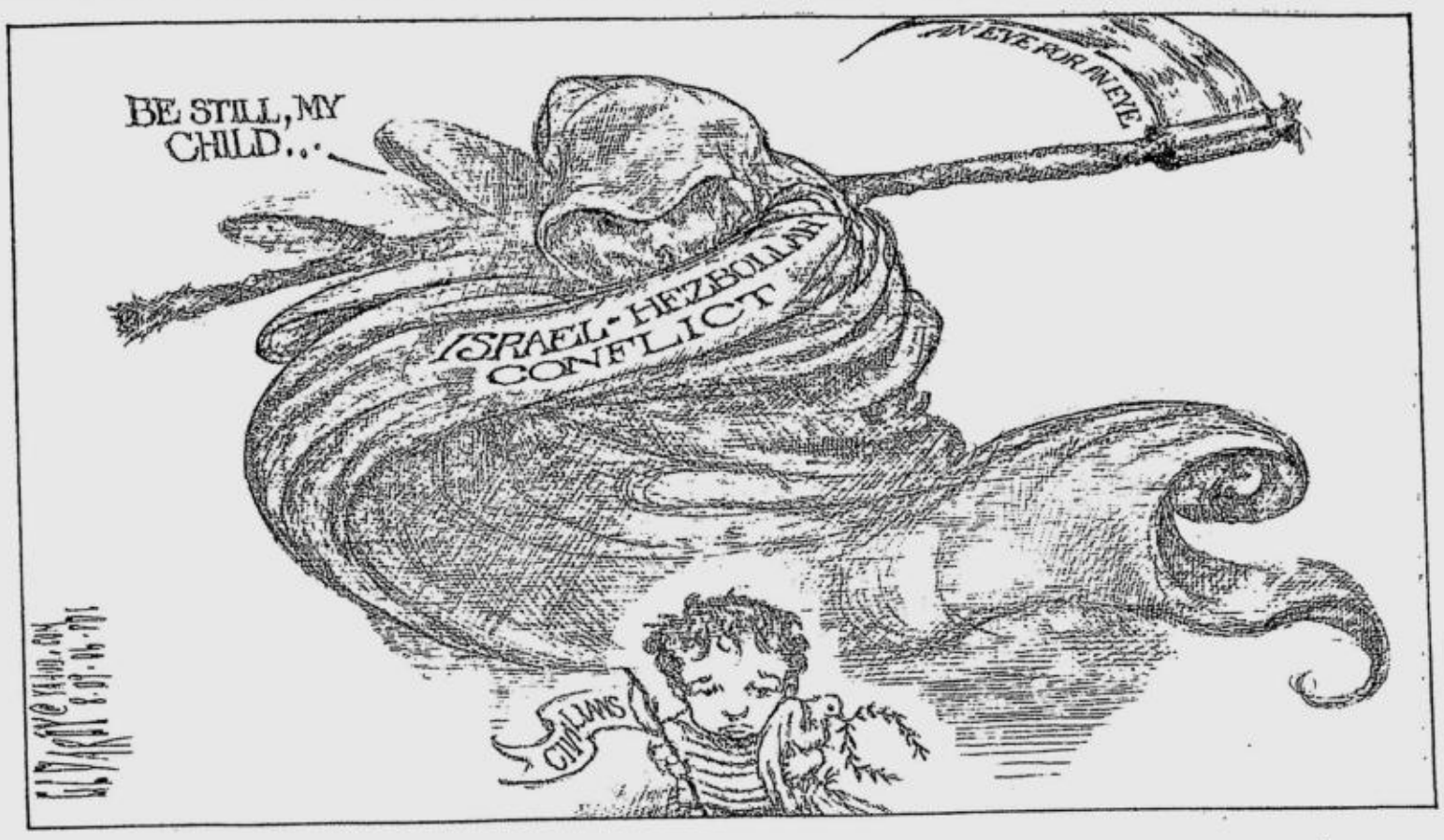


Lawyers argue against SC decision on Maysilo

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

(Continued from last Monday)

IN THE CONTROVERSY OVER THE OWNERship of a portion of Maysilo Estate, specifically OCT 994, from which a number of TCTs emanated, the issue is which of two OCTs with different dates, over the same piece of land, is superior to the other. A portion of the land covered by OCT 994 was bought by the Araneta Institute of Agriculture (AIA) in the late 1940s. AIA has been in peaceful and uncontested ownership and possession of the property since then. OCT 994, from which AIA's title came, is dated May 3, 1917.

In 1977, a lawyer by the name of Jose Dimson filed a case before the Caloocan regional trial court for the execution of a decision 11 years before by Judge Cecilia Muñoz-Palma confirming the Deed of Conveyance issued to him by one of the alleged heirs of Maria de la Concepcion Vidal, one of the owners of the vast estate (see column of Aug. 7). The basis of Dimson's title is OCT 994 dated April 19, 1917.

Following a ruling in MWSS vs. CA, in which the Supreme Court said that where two certificates of title over the same land exist, the earlier prevails, the lower court upheld Dimson's title.

But lawyers of AIA argue that:

1. There is only one OCT 994, that which was issued on May 3, 1917 and not on April 19, 1917. The same is upheld by several officials of the Land Registration Authority and the certification issued by the Caloocan Register of Deeds as well as by the Department of Justice and the Senate.

2. The Supreme Court should have made a distinction between a decree of registration and certificate of title. Section 41 of the Land Registration Act says that a certificate of title takes effect not when the decree was issued but only on the date of transcription of the decree of registration. Since the transcription of the decree of OCT 994 was made on May 3, 1917, it should be deemed the date its certificate of title was issued.

3. The Supreme Court should have at least granted a new trial and remanded the case back to the lower court since the DOJ and the Senate reports have probative value and hold some persuasive effect since both are deemed regular acts. The same could trace the original certificates of title from which the disputed TCTs were derived.

4. The issue of whether or not only one valid OCT 994 was issued on May 3, 1917 is very important. The Supreme Court should have taken it into consideration because it involved a total of 1,342 hectares of prime land in four cities now occupied by various public and commercial buildings, residential houses and schools.

5. The Court of Appeals, in its decision, went beyond the issues raised when it concluded that AIA's title is a nullity when it was not touched upon by the Caloocan RTC in its decision. This alone should have compelled the Supreme Court to review the findings of the Court of Appeals.

6. The MWSS case does not apply in the present case because no pronouncement on the validity of Dimson's petition before the Caloocan RTC was made by the court because AIA was not a party in the MWSS case, and the issues raised in the MWSS are different from the present controversy.

7. The Caloocan RTC had no jurisdiction to award and issue TCTs to Dimson because the Pasig RTC should have been asked to implement its own order.

8. Dimson's title was irregularly issued because it was made without the presentation of the owner's certificate of the transferor (Section 55, Land Registration Act) and the corresponding subdivision plan duly approved by the Bureau of Lands or the Land Registration Authority (Section 58, Land Registration Act).

9. It is highly improbable that Dimson's title came from OCT 994 because as early as 1920, the Maysilo Estate had already been partitioned and distributed to the different owners as shown in the cases of Bustamante vs. Tuason (47 PR 696) and Garcia vs. CA (35 SCRA 380).

10. In at least three different cases pending in different courts, two in the Supreme Court and one in the Court of Appeals, the title of Dimson has been established to be "spurious, inexistent, fraudulent and of impossible origin" (Phil-Ville Development and Housing Corp. vs. CLT Realty Development Corp; Alfonso vs. Office of the President and Phil-Ville Development and Housing Corp.; and Republic of the Philippines vs. Lilia Sevilla and Jose Seelin.

Based on the above facts and arguments, it is easy to determine which of the two parties has a better right to the land.

Property owners and legal experts have expressed apprehension over the implications of the Supreme Court ruling. They said that if the title of the winning claimant (Dimson) is upheld, it would create a crisis among the present owners of the lands originating from OCT 994 dated May 3, 1917. As things stand, most of the current owners and occupants of the lots in the areas affected by the Supreme Court ruling originate from OCT 994 dated May 3, 1917. They are asking: What will happen to our titles? Will the current titleholders be evicted? Hundreds or thousands of lot owners in the affected areas face the danger of losing their homes if Dimson's title is upheld, they fear. If I am not mistaken, however, the land titles of "buyers in good faith" are protected by law.

But certainly, this issue has far-reaching effects not only on the validity of land titles in the country but the entire system of land registration. This will undermine the integrity of our torrens system and evoke fears that land titles that have been issued within the regular and normal process are still not fool-proof.

The living and the dead

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

LAST WEEKEND WAS THE FIRST DEATH ANniversary of my good friend Raul Roco. I remember that he died a month after GMA apologized for her "lapse of judgment" in helloing Garci. By that time Raul was already far too ravaged by disease to heed the cares of this world. But in light of everything that has happened since then, I kind of feel a greater sense of loss over his passing today than last year.

At the very least that is so because Raul's case bears directly on the issue of legitimacy. Every time I hear government officials say let's forget GMA's illegitimacy, let's just concentrate on her performance (the last time of course was during the Sona, when every GMA minion sounded that call), I remember him.

As competence goes, as efficiency goes, as performance goes, few came better than Raul. GMA was, and is, not one of them. How did they fare before the 2004 elections?

Well, GMA ruled so badly—her tenure was characterized by wheeling-and-dealing and corruption (to the bitterness of the Edsa II forces that put her in power)—she had to lie about her political intentions after a couple of years, vowing before the grave of Jose Rizal she would not run in 2004. At the same time, Raul was doing a sterling job at the Department of Education. A year after he took over as education secretary, he had turned the department from one of the worst offices in this country, home to textbook scams and other atrocities, to one of the best, restoring to education the lofty name befitting it. Recognition of that accomplishment did not come from hangers-on and paid hacks, it came from the World Bank and other international bodies.

If being competent, honest and efficient were a natural claim to being president, Raul Roco would have been our president after 2004. Alas, there is one other thing that's needed to become so, and that is to be voted into power. Before competence comes legitimacy. Roco was not elected president. Neither was GMA.

To those who say that better that we have GMA because if we had Roco or Fernando Poe Jr. as president, we would have been politically orphaned before the spit could dry on their mouths after their inauguration speeches, I say this: Better a few months of purgatory or heaven than 10 years of hell. Or indeed who says the hell would end after 10 years?

At the very most, I feel Raul's death more keenly today because he answers the question of whether entertainers are better than *trapos* or *trapos* are better than entertainers. The answer is neither. Raul was living proof our choice of political leaders need not be confined to them.

He was not an entertainer-turned-politician, he was a lawyer-turned-politician. But he respected entertainers, or indeed artists. He had as much respect for art and artists as for law and lawyers and politics and politicians. He had no respect for the hacks in all of them.

And though he rose through politics by the traditional route, he never became a traditional politician, or *trapo*, in all the malignant senses of that word, in the sense of being perfectly willing to sell one's mother to get ahead in life. I look at the current *trapos* in Congress, notably the ones who jumped up and down like chimpanzees in the last Sona, or its equivalent in sycophantic histrionics, and I think truly that lot wouldn't mind selling their mothers to get by. Never mind spouses and *kabits*, they'd give them away free.

I know Raul would never have called "a Comelec official" in the middle of the counting of votes even for the most innocent of reasons. He was a stickler for doing things the right way, the legal way, the moral way, which pissed off a lot of people in the process. Many called him righteous, a word meant to disparage but which has taken on new and louder moral resonances over time. I remember again his meeting with a political party before the elections and how he turned off its members when he lectured them about putting the country above self after they asked what was in it for them. He wasn't a realist in that sense, but in a country where realism has become just another word for opportunism, I don't know that he didn't do well to choose that path. He lost the presidency but gained his soul. What a profit.

He was by no means a saint. The rumors about his "personality flaws" were not all untrue. He could be irascible, impatient, impetuous. We had our own run-ins, particularly over media. He kept demanding that media be this and that, and I kept telling him that was just not how the thing worked, it paid better to woo them than to try to bludgeon them to submission. But looking back, it was a pleasure to have worked with someone who hewed to such high, if often unreasonable, political standards and asked the same thing from everyone around him. Especially in light of his fellow Bicolanos currently pushing and shoving for the pleasure of serving a usurper. Winning and losing are curious words. Some people who lose really win, some people who win really lose.

In these days when the voters are being told to choose merely between *trapos* and entertainers, indeed where the public is being cajoled to prop up the *trapos* who did not win the elections rather than the entertainers who did, and still indeed where the people are being told to prefer the vicious dictatorship of the *trapos* to the profligate frivolities of entertainers, it is good to be reminded that we do not lack for other options. There are leaders out there, actual or potential, who are neither the one nor the other. There are leaders out there who are, or can, be plain good public servants. Raul Roco was one of them.

The tragedy of this country is not that seldom has it had choices. It is that seldom has it had the eyes to see them.

The other side of Fidel Castro

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

WHEN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO OF CUBA "temporarily delegated" power last week to his brother Raul, after he underwent surgery for intestinal bleeding, two things predictably happened. First, the 650,000-strong Cuban exile community in the United States exploded in celebration in Miami, Florida, waving Cuban flags and chanting "Viva Cuba Libre!" They were jubilant that the 47-year Castro dictatorship had come to an end. As one of their leaders put it, "It's a wonderful moment for democracy to flourish in Cuba."

The other predictable reaction was US President George W. Bush's move to stoke the exiles' jubilation. Bush issued a provocative statement, saying: "I urge the Cuban people to work for democratic change on the island. While we support you in your effort to build a transitional government committed to democracy, we will take note of those in the current Cuban regime, who obstruct your desire for a free Cuba." With that statement, Bush served notice that the United States is prepared to undertake another politically civilizing mission to revitalize democracy in the Western hemisphere and Latin America even as his project to spoon-feed democracy to Iraq appears to be failing and costing a lot of American soldiers' lives, as well as Iraqi lives, in a nasty civil war.

But even with his serious illness, Castro did not oblige the fondest hopes of Bush and the exiles. Castro's health is kept as a tightly guarded "state secret" in Cuba. The regime's caretakers have not disclosed his real condition and have not issued regular health bulletins, but the latest reports indicate that Castro would stay a few more weeks in the hospital.

Raul Castro has not showed up in public, deepening the mystery, but a few things have crystallized. Fidel Castro's ill-wishers will have to wait a while.

The Cuban regime has not disintegrated with the collapse of Castro's health. A transition team has been put in place and the caretakers have mobilized reservists to resist invasion by liberating exiles, acting as proxies of the US government. Even if Castro goes or is incapacitated for a long time, the communist regime is shoring up the ruling structure against any drastic return to democracy.

Castro has decreed that his brother Raul, 75, who is defense minister, would take over as first secretary of the Communist Party, president and commander in chief. Unlike other communist parties, Castro has developed a dynasty and a line of succession to ensure continuity of policy and party control. He is reported to trust only his brother, who has been his right-hand man since the Cuban revolution 47 years ago, although it has also been reported that Raul has shown tendencies to introduce market elements in the economy.

Castro had put in place a transitional team before he was struck by illness. Significantly, the announcement of the delegation of powers was read on television by a member of a tight-knit group of party faithful in their 20s or 30s forming a so-called Praetorian Guard. The announcement handed over responsibility for key economic areas to senior bureaucrats—Carlos Lague, a vice president, and Felipe Perez, the minister for foreign affairs—now in their 50s.

Few leaders in authoritarian systems have built transitional mechanisms or a second line of leadership. When President Suharto fell from power in Indonesia, he had not laid the ground for an orderly succession. Castro seems to be different. He had a system of succession in place led by his brother, who is ideologically cast in the same mold.

The state of the Cuban economy under Castro and the Cuban model of socialism leave much to be desired. One of the questions now being asked amid the uncertainty over Castro's health is whether his heirs would introduce reforms to liberalize the economy.

Leaving the economic issues in the meantime, there are glowing reports about Cuba's education system and health care. I am calling attention to these programs, because health care and education are important issues in the Philippines as they reveal how socially compassionate our government or system is.

In an article in the Guardian of London, John Harris, who made a film for the BBC on the "World's Best Public Services," reported that Cuba may look forlorn with "peeling buildings and pockmarked roads," but, unlike the old states of Eastern Europe, "the revolution has a few genuine jewels to defend: its education system and globally acclaimed health care."

Harris reported that the Cuban health system emphasizes preventive care and locks doctors into their local populations. The system is built around simplicity from which Britain's National Health Service "would do well to learn," he concluded.

Harris said Cubans have an average life expectancy of 77.3 years compared to 77.34 for Americans. Infant mortality rates in Cuba and the United States are almost the same. But he also pointed out that their respective health budgets "underline the Cuban miracle": in the United States, the annual figures per head is $5,711, and in Cuba, it is $251. Despite this, Cuban medical schools train First World doctors, among them Americans, on its budget, with excellent results. Also, like the Philippines, Cuba exports doctors to both First World and Third World countries, not necessarily socialist countries.

Harris reported that when he spoke to trainee doctors, dental patients and expectant mothers, he came away with the impression that "anyone who would let loose a free market and sweep away Castro's public services would be in deep trouble."

Kindness

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

I WON'T NAME THE PROVINCE BECAUSE I'VE ALREADY contacted the authorities there, hoping they'll do something. I'm writing about this here with the suspicion that this is happening all over the country, and hoping readers will do their part, in their own hometowns.

Last week I was in one of those picture-perfect resorts with a Dutch university professor and her daughter, combining work with a bit of a vacation. We had it all: sun, sea, surf and more.

There were, foremost, the children. They'd pass by alone or in groups, some of the bolder ones coming up to talk. Long after they'd leave, we could still hear their chatter, their laughter.

Adding to the warmth of these scenes were the dogs. Early mornings were the best time to catch them, some accompanying children to school, others roaming in groups, occasionally wrestling each other. As with people, there were some laggards too, curled up and sleeping late. Still others were the solitary types, walking alone as if in deep contemplation.

The resort itself had three dogs, which would come around every now and then to play with the guests, coaxing us to give them a quick massage. The resort's visitors, mostly foreigners, were only too happy to oblige.

Dark clouds

So it went, no one expecting to see so soon this paradise disintegrating.

The dark clouds began to gather on the second day of our stay. My visitors and I were strolling through one of the villages. It was around 1 p.m. and we had just visited the barangay chapel and lighthouse. As we approached one of the houses, we could hear a man's voice getting louder and louder, full of anger as he scolded several small children in his yard.

The father was clearly working himself into an uncontrollable rage. One of the children began whimpering, and then the beating began. I looked back and could see him dragging the child into his hut. The child ran out of the hut and got another beating, accompanied by a torrent of curses.

All this was happening close to a school and some kids watched but kept their distance, a decision our group took as well. For all our talk about Filipino community spirit, we generally try not to intrude into domestic affairs. But I did make a mental note of the incident and planned to take it up with contacts in the health department.

That night I tried not to think of the child-beating as we entertained more visitors: a Dutch journalist, his Filipino wife, their two kids and some of her relatives. For the children, it was love at first sight when they saw the resort's dogs. Dinner for the children became more of token nibbling, interrupted by more playing with the dogs. After the visitors left, I took a stroll by the beach and found several sand paintings, mixed with the footprints of the children and the dogs.

Protecting tourists

The next day, my visitors and I went into town for a bit of sightseeing. It passed uneventfully except at one point where the Dutch professor noticed a policeman with a rifle. She shivered and said, "I don't like that." In Europe, people don't run around carrying arms, not even policemen. My friend had lived in Manila several years back and was used to seeing armed security guards, but it did seem strange seeing an armed man in a quiet rural area.

Time passed quickly and soon it was time for my visitors to leave. The morning of their departure, I went off for a walk as the visitors packed. But the morning calm was suddenly shattered by the most heartrending cries of a dog. It went on for a few seconds, so I knew it wasn't a dog hurting from a small accident. And then there was silence.

As I walked toward the street to check what was going on, it seemed as if a tape recorder had been turned on again to replay the entire agonizing scene, except that this time I could also hear dull sounds indicating a dog was being beaten to death.

I decided not to look, partly because my visitors had by then come down with their bags and we needed to leave for the airport. I didn't want to upset their stay so I didn't tell them what happened. As we loaded their bags into the resort van, we saw a group of armed men again. My visitor again shivered, "They shouldn't have armed people around in resorts."

I got back to the resort in the evening. Over dinner, I realized the resort dogs weren't around. My heart sank as I wondered if they had been the ones killed. To my relief, I found out they were safe, but they were under leash, kept hidden for the meantime by their worried owner.

Two dogs had indeed been killed that morning right outside the resort. The residents said there's a municipal ordinance that allows policemen to shoot stray dogs. "Dog-hunting to protect the tourists," one resident said, then added, smiling, "It's also *pulutan*."

Back in Manila I finally told the visitors about what had happened and they agreed it was important that I write about the incidents. We have questions for the authorities—the local government officials as well as those in the hotel and tourism industry. What does all this say about us as a people when fathers beat up their children totally without shame even as visitors pass by their homes? What does it say about Filipinos when we protect tourists by deploying armed men who go around, shooting and beating dogs to death?

What's happening to our child protection laws, our Bantay Bata programs? Why is the country's Animal Welfare Act being violated by law enforcers themselves? If indeed dog-slaughtering is meant as a public health measure, why not adopt the civilized ways—rounding up and impounding the dogs first and giving owners a chance to claim them.

We spend millions advertising the Philippines as a "Wow" place for tourists and foreigners who want to retire. But all it takes is one zealous child advocate, or one animal rights activist, to witness what I saw and put the stories on the Internet, and foreign newspapers and people will associate the Philippines not with white sand beaches and sunny smiles, but with images of abused children and dogs beaten to death.

Yes, it's a tough and violent world out there. But I wonder if the child abuse and dog-slaughtering are signs that we're not only becoming desensitized to violence, but also actually now enjoy blood and gore. After the two dogs were killed, I could hear people running around shouting, "*Patay! Patay!*" (dead, dead), with the same kind of perverted delight and cheers you hear from the crowds during cockfights and boxing.

Now I hear proposals to include boxing in elementary schools nationwide. Enough of this nonsense. What we need are more teachers promoting child welfare, environmental conservation, including the protection of animals. All the more now, we need to do something about our growing callousness. Let's do this for ourselves, for a kinder nation, a kinder world.

Bottles are for dummies

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

CHILDREN OF BREAST-FEEDING MOTHERS, IT has been observed, follow suit by "breastfeeding" their dolls. "Hopefully," writes the NGO, Children for Breastfeeding, "this will instill in their young minds that breastfeeding is the most natural and beautiful way of nurturing, when they become parents themselves."

I don't remember "breast-feeding" dolls when I was a child, but I do remember that brand-new "infant" dolls came with a tiny plastic bottle and nipple enclosed in the shiny packaging. We used to think it a hoot that you could fill the bottle with water and see water seep out of the baby "down there" a few minutes later.

I'm almost sure I was bottle-fed, not just because I am the sixth of nine children, but also because, by then, my parents had decided to relocate to Manila and Mama was well on her way to becoming a "Manila" matron, determined to jettison all traces of the "*probinsyana*" she had been. And part of the process of becoming citified was giving birth in a hospital instead of at home, and then adopting the "modern" practice of bottle-feeding.

By the time I first became pregnant, mothers were increasingly being urged to "return" to breastfeeding. I was mildly convinced, but to my embarrassment today, did nothing to educate myself. Like so many women, I thought breastfeeding would come to me "naturally."

Then came my and my son's first night home from the hospital. He had been crying non-stop, it seemed, and I was getting frustrated with my awkward attempts to get him to suckle from my breast. After numerous failed tries, my husband brandished the can of infant formula we had taken home from the hospital (this was years before the enactment of the Milk Code) and scolded me: "Stop experimenting with our son! There's milk right here. Use this!"

And that is how my son became a bottle-fed baby.

* * *

FORTUNATELY, my mothering tale has a happy ending.

Six years later, when I got pregnant with my daughter, I was determined to rectify my error. First, the hubby who had declared with my first pregnancy that he would never set foot in the delivery room because he was "afraid of blood," agreed to take natural childbirth classes with me. Mercy Fabros, my Lamaze teacher who has since become a lifelong friend, was (and is) an ardent breast-feeding advocate, warning us "never, never have a can of formula in your house when you bring your baby home, because you will be tempted to use it when things get rough." As if I needed the reminder!

Second, I set out to learn as much as I could about breastfeeding. Especially helpful was my sister Chona, who had given birth in the United States and mailed me a fat envelope of materials on breastfeeding. She also threw in her own advice born of experience: "Let your baby suck on your breast for as long as she wants. Cesi (her daughter) suckles for as long as 45 minutes!"

I've written in this space that the six months I spent exclusively breast-feeding my daughter Miya was one of the happiest periods of my life. There's nothing like breastfeeding to give focus to your life. For once I knew exactly what I was put on this earth for—to nurture this baby.

* * *

AND what a baby she was! While she never gained the jelly-roll chubbiness that is our standard image of a healthy baby (breast-fed babies are naturally thinner than bottle-fed ones), she was rarely sick and was uncommonly good-natured. While her *kuya* had to be brought to the pedia practically every week in his first year due to a string of ailments, from diarrhea to colds, Miya was rarely sick.

I was also getting a lot more sleep than I expected. When she woke up in the middle of the night for feeding, all I had to do was to pull down my duster and aim a breast at her face. I would fall back to blissful slumber while she fed. Contrast this with feeding our son, when either my husband or I would have to get up from bed, mix a bottle, then sit up and carry him while he fed—every 15 minutes, it seemed!

Despite our vigilance and paranoia common to first-time parents, all sorts of mishaps took place in the course of bottle-feeding. One time, the *yaya* forgot about a pot full of plastic bottles she was sterilizing, leaving us with a dozen melted receptacles. Each time my son threw his bottle to the ground, we would have to change the dirty nipple with a sterilized one. We had to guard against flies, ants and ignorant *yayas*.

Modern? Convenient? Progressive? Bottle-feeding turned out to be messier and riskier than the age-old, natural way of breastfeeding.

* * *

WE'RE in the midst of observing World Breastfeeding Week and this year's observance also marks the 25th anniversary of the 1981 International Milk Code and the 20th anniversary of the 1986 National Milk Code (EO 51).

On Aug. 14, President Macapagal-Arroyo will be present when the revised Implementing Rules and Regulations of the Milk Code are signed in Malacañang. The IRR has generated a lot of controversy, especially a provision that would ban all advertising of infant formula here, and recently the Supreme Court, in an en banc decision, denied the petition (of milk companies) for a temporary restraining order against the IRR.

Children .for Breastfeeding posits that breastfeeding "is the most far-reaching and least costly of all strategies for the alleviation of poverty." Current figures show that the Philippines spends $57 million (or P3.1 billion) a year on infant formula alone, which is sold to nursing mothers at seven times its import cost. Poor families spend 30 percent of family income on this commodity.

So even while my days as a breast-feeding mother are long past, let me tell you: Breastfeeding makes much better sense on so many levels that only a dummy would choose the bottle over the breast.

Tanduay

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ASK A FILIPINO TO DEFINE THE WORD "Tanduay," and he will associate the term first, with a professional basketball team, and second, as a brand name of the oldest brand of rum in the market. As a matter of fact, the word does not exist in any of the early Philippine dictionaries. The closest sounding word is "*tang-uay,*" which the "Vocabulario de Tagalo," compiled by Francisco de San Antonio and published in 1620, defines as "a point of land on the sea." Juan de Noceda and Pedro de Sanlucar, in the 1860 edition of their "Vocabulario de la Lengua Tagala," provides a similar definition: an isthmus or peninsula; a narrow neck of land connecting two larger bodies of land on water.

Historically, detailed maps of old Manila show an Isla de Tanduay in the suburbs of San Miguel, outside the medieval walled city of Intramuros. *Tangway* also refers to low-lying land, which best describes the San Miguel district that often gets flooded when the nearby Pasig River overflows during the rainy season.

San Miguel is not only the seat of power because it is here where Malacañang, the official residence of the President of the Philippines, is located. It is also the same district where local spirits used to be brewed, hence San Miguel Beer, Ginebra San Miguel and, of course, Tanduay Rhum, whose name is derived from the place where its original distillery was located. If one were to go by a convenient but obscure reference in the Jesuit Francisco Colin's "Labor evangelica," first published in 1663, *tanduay* was defined as "an alcoholic drink made from sugarcane."

According to its distinctive label, Tanduay Rhum, or at least the distillery that produces it, was established in 1854 when Joaquin Elizalde and Joaquin Ynchausti, two expatriate Basques, started a chandlery on Muelle de Industria in Binondo for the outfitting and provisioning of ships. Through the years, the partnership known as Ynchausti y Cia expanded and diversified into inter-island shipping, agriculture (particularly sugar, the main ingredient of Tanduay Rhum), rope manufacture, etc.

Tanduay Rhum actually traces its beginnings to Valentin Teus, who joined Ynchausti y Cia in 1856 with a distillery in Hagonoy, Bulacan, acquired from a certain Elias Menchatorre. There are no extant historical records to pinpoint the exact date when the company first started making rum, so following company tradition, Tanduay Rhum and the distillery are assigned the same foundation date as the parent company: 1854.

It is to be noted that the Hagonoy distillery Teus brought into Ynchausti y Cia was already in operation at the time it was acquired from Menchatorre. We have no record of the product name, and we can assume that at the time, all alcoholic products were sold without brand names or distinctive labels and were referred to as generic products: *aguardiente* (the Spanish term for alcohol), tuba which is a drink fermented or distilled from palm, nipa or coconut, and of course *ron* which referred to any distilled spirit, the term being a Hispanized version of the English "rum" or "rhum."

Early records of the company products list the rum simply as "Ron de Distileria de Hagonoy y Tanduay," literally, rum from the distillery of Hagonoy and Tanduay. By 1934, this became, simply, Tanduay Distillery.

The rum was originally packaged in large 10-gallon, blown glass bottles with a narrow neck known as demijohns (or in the Philippines, *dama juana*). These were covered with a distinctive wicker basket to provide insulation against breakage and also a gripping surface for handlers and porters.

From the distillery, these bottles were transported on bancas along the Pasig and the network of smaller waterways or esteros that made tourists describe Manila as a "Little Venice."

Ynchausti y Cia also distributed the rum through its inter-island shipping network. In the 1930s, Tanduay Rhum did not only get its name but it was re-packaged from *dama juanas* to a smaller 750 ml "long neck" bottle and the distinctive glass flask, a flat 375-ml bottle that could fit comfortably in a hip or vest pocket. The latter is now affectionately called "*lapad*" (flat or broad) for its shape.

Bottles for Tanduay Rhum were originally bought from San Miguel Brewery, but these are now supplied by a sister company, Asia Brewery.

Tanduay Rhum does go back a long way and its present label proudly sports some of the numerous awards presented to it as early as the 1876 Exposicion de Gane Bale in Paris, France. There was the 1887 Exposition in Madrid and the St. Louis Exposition in the United States in 1904. In recent years, Tanduay has reaped more gold medals in the Selection Mondial des Vins Alcools et Liquers, a gold medal given in Luxembourg in 1977, another in Brussels in 1987 and yet another in Lisbon in 1996, making it an outstanding product not only in the Philippines but in the world as well.

From its 19th-century beginnings in a small Hagonoy distillery to the present modernized and expanded operations under Lucio Tan that produces 50,000 barrels of rum a day, we see a long history. From the original generic rum in *dama juana* to the present diverse line of products—Tanduay 5 Years, Tanduay Gold, Tanduay Dark, Tanduay White, Tanduay Centennial and Tanduay ESQ—we see a continuation of the past.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Insensitive to OFW sufferings

"IT'S GOOD THAT THERE IS WAR. This is my chance to escape from my master. I am being raped by my employers," a young overseas Filipino worker in Lebanon tearfully narrated on national TV on the night of July 24, the day President Macapagal-Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address.

This experience of an OFW is just a glimpse of the miserable condition of 8 million Filipino men and women who have left home for strange lands to work as maids, caregivers, drivers, construction workers, etc. just so they can lift their families out of a life of poverty and misery. With or without war, many of our poor OFWs, especially women, are exposed to many forms of exploitation and oppression abroad.

Think of the millions of OFWs who have to clean toilet bowls and of the helpless maids beaten and violated by their employers. Think of the OFWs who are forced to suffer racial prejudice because they need to survive. Think of the OFWs who can only long for the embrace of their loved ones.

Yet, people often unfairly look down on our OFWs as too materialistic, whose value system is very low. Some people would even go far in saying that they are money-greedy and have no concern at all in maintaining good family values.

This "moralistic" point of view misses a very important point: If there is someone who is very materialistic and has a low-value system, it is the government.

For the government, the sufferings of our OFWs abroad are all right as long as they remit dollars. Our OFWs work so hard and suffer so much while Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her minions live a life of luxury. But her government cannot even protect and defend them.

With the war in Lebanon, some 34,000 OFWs are in danger of being dislocated and could end back home in the arms of poverty and misery. Note also that of the P7.6 billion Owwa cash reserves, GMA could only allocate a measly sum of P150 million for the rescue of the distressed Filipinos in that country. Is this the way GMA regards the so-called modern-day "heroes" of our country?

Obviously, this government makes a profit out of the OFWs while it cheats and robs them. Who will forget the PhilHealth cards used for GMA's presidential campaign? It will not be a surprise if one day the tears of these suffering OFWs turn into a fire of resistance.

—NORMA P. DOLLAGA,
general secretary,
Kapatirang Simbahan
Para Sa Bayan (Kasimbayan),
3/F NCCP, 879 Edsa, Quezon City

Let's start the Revolution of the Filipino Youth

WE NEED A NEW BREED OF FILipino leaders who will exemplify John F. Kennedy's popular saying of "Ask not what your country can do for you but ask what you can do for your country."

Obviously lacking in competent and service-oriented leaders today, the Philippines suffers from a state of national inertia. As countries around Southeast Asia including Indonesia, march on the road to progress, our country, like many of the poorest African states and tiny nations, remains a "sick man," sliding down the road of poverty.

Nowhere in our history has the Philippines been like this. Thus, I urge my fellow generation of young Filipinos to rise up to the challenge of creating a new breed of leaders who will not squirm in the face of today's biggest challenges, to live by the Christian values taught to us and to promote principled leadership.

We need new leaders who can:

1. Brainstorm with the country's best economists, educators and scientists.

2. Implement our laws vigorously, stamp out crime and corruption and promulgate laws objectively without delay.

3. Reform the government through dialogue and innovation.

These are indeed simple statements but quite hard to live by. The current administration, by refusing to come clean on the controversies hounding it, has lost all of its credibility. But the opposition cannot offer a viable alternative. Our present condition has caused a national paralysis, not unlike the situation of a dying man on his deathbed.

Only the youth can save this country now. We need young leaders who have their eyes on creating a truly great Philippine republic—strong, vibrant and rich! The Filipino youth can rise up to this challenge. It is high time that the youth of this country claimed the national leadership. We represent 60 percent of the country's population, we ought to control the way things are done.

I urge young Filipinos to actively get involved in the current affairs. Denounce the railroading of Charter change! Denounce abuse of power! Denounce cheating in elections! Denounce the lack of funding for education! Denounce the current breed of corrupt leaders!

If you believe it is high time to change the course of Philippine history, e-mail me at javometa@yahoo.com and let us start the Revolution of the Filipino Youth.

—JAY MICHAEL O. JABONETA

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

Abolish ARMM

THE MUSLIM RESIDENTS OF Maguindanao, Lanao, Basilan, Sulu and Tawi-Tawi call on President Macapagal-Arroyo to abolish the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The ARMM government is inutile and its key officials, from the time of its creation, have been effective only in graft and corruption. The Muslims in the five ARMM provinces have not in any way benefited from programs to improve their living conditions.

The ARMM's was created to give its neglected inhabitants the same opportunities as those open to their Christian counterparts. But despite the ARMM, the demand of Muslims for equal government attention has not been met.

The Filipino Muslims residing in the five ARMM provinces are also calling on our legislators: Abolish the ARMM once and for all. Prolonging the life of the ARMM will only cause further sufferings for Muslims. This is so because the Muslims running the ARMM are not fit to lead; they do not provide the basic services we badly need.

The Muslims who are best qualified and needed by the people to manage the ARMM are not elected or supported by the national government. Those who are backed up and given financial support by the national government in the elections for the ARMM's leadership are the crooked Muslims who only know how to run the ARMM like hell. The abolition of the ARMM will save the government the billions of pesos given to the ARMM every year to help poor Muslims improve their lives.

If Ms Arroyo and her legislators were able to abolish a very much-needed law like the law on the death penalty, why could it not successfully do the same with the ARMM, in the best interest of Filipino Muslims?

We also appeal to Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez to go after the ARMM's corrupt officials, including the ones who governed the region in the past.

—ABOSUOD BALPAKKI MUSAWI,
Bongao, Tawi-Tawi

BCDA critic not fictitious

I NOTED WITH GRAVE CONCERN the letter of Leilani B. Macasaet who identified herself as public affairs manager of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority. (PDI, 8/4/06)

Macasaet apparently wishes to make it appear that I am a fictitious person. I am not. Macasaet must not rely on her very limited "links" with the La Union community to establish the veracity of my existence. As a government employee whose salary comes from the taxpayers, Macasaet does her office a great disservice by concluding, after only a couple of inquiries, that this critic of her superiors does not exist. She should have gone further.

Macasaet has also done her superior, retired general Narciso Abaya, a disservice by resorting to ad hominem attacks against the critics of her agency. She used precious INQUIRER space to cast doubt on the person of a critic of the BCDA but she did not answer the critical issues raised against the BCDA: its obsession to forcibly take over Poro Point in wanton disregard of the sanctity of business covenants. Nowhere in Macasaet's letter was that issue addressed.

Macasaet apparently wants to send signals to the BCDA's critics that the agency, which has many retired generals in its payroll, has an intelligence network to trace its critics. Instead of sending us a subtle threat, Macasaet should answer the issues raised against the BCDA. This is her job as a public information officer paid with taxpayers' money.

Macasaet also feigns ignorance about a BCDA statement lauding the Poro Point seaport on the basis of a Philippine Ports Authority study. May we ask her to review her own files. She might be surprised to find that BCDA statement there. If not, we can send her copies.

Finally, Macasaet insinuates that the INQUIRER is being used by "sinister" elements. In a democracy such as ours, nothing could be more sinister than a government agency using government time and money to check on its critics. Is Macasaet telling us to shut up and look the other way while her agency does what it wants in our own backyard? Is she telling the INQUIRER to deprive us of space to air our grievances simply because we have made her boss uncomfortable?

I dare Macasaet to face me in the town plaza of San Fernando City in La Union, in front of my Ilocano compatriots, to discuss the points we have legitimately raised against the BCDA. There is no better way to know the position of one's nemesis than in an open arena of democratic debate.

Or has the BCDA, a generals' lair, forgotten about that?

—CONRADO DELOS REYES,
spokesperson,
National Consumers Welfare Advocate Group

Why do we allow ourselves to be fooled over and over?

EVERY DAY THAT I READ THE dailies, in particular the INQUIRER, I notice that stories of poverty, corruption and cases of injustice occupy much of the papers' space. As much as I want to avoid such stories like a plague, I seem to be hooked on reading them, even if most of them are completely sick and outright dismal.

Whenever I read them, the first question that pops and lingers in my mind is "Why?"

Why do we have to hear Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo harping on her so-called "accomplishments," while we all know they are usually "manufactured" or taken completely out of proportion? Why do we have to listen to her favorite mantra "Let's move on," while she refuses to give rational explanations to the charges of rampant cheating and corruption in her administration? Why does our government prioritize the wrong things, like this all-out war against the Reds, while problems of poverty and corruption are left hanging? Why do we let incompetent people like Michael Defensor, Ignacio Bunye, Camilo Sabio, Ricardo Abcede and the delusional Gonzales twins hold important positions in government?

Why do we allow ourselves to be fooled over and over again and refuse to learn anything from previous mistakes? Why do we say that our country has no hope when the only hope it always has is its people? Why do we have to wait for more questions to pop when the only sensible thing to do is do something? The truth is—the answer lies within us.

—ANGELO ABENDAN,
mr.ocaabendan2@gmail.com

Give GMA a chance

I WOULD LIKE TO comment on the article regarding the mixed public reaction to the President's State of the Nation Address. (PDI, 7/25/06)

The greatest obstacle to our country's development is the opposition and the political ambitions of its members. They would say anything just to criticize and discredit the President even if her plans are worth supporting.

Instead of grandstanding and thinking of their political ambitions, opposition members should support President Macapagal-Arroyo and give her a chance to implement her programs for the country. As Winnie Monsod said, "the President has basis for claiming that the country's economy has improved and that more jobs were generated during her term."

We must understand that improving the state of the nation cannot be done overnight. It will take us years to transform the Philippines into a First World country; and with the way GMA is running it, I can say that we are getting there.

Our country will not prosper for as long as our people are divided by politics. I believe that whoever the President is, if we don't support him/her, this country is going nowhere but to the dogs.

—OLAN RODOLFO,
olan.rodolfo@lycos.com

Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

The JBC announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

REGIONAL TRIAL COURT (RTC): (REGION V) – ***DAET, CAMARINES NORTE:*** *(Br. 41)* **BOBIS**, Rolando D.; **CONTRERAS**, Manuel E.; **DATING**, Arniel A.; **DY**, Jose G.; **ESCARO**, Roberto A.; **BRAGAIS**, Zenaida N. **(REGION VII) – *DANAO CITY, CEBU:*** *(Br. 25)* **BACALE**, Ateneones S.; **ENEMECIO**, Edito Y.; **JACA**, Cornelio T.; **NAVARRO**, Wilfredo F.; **ONG**, Manuel F. **(REGION VIII) – *CALUBIAN, LEYTE:*** *(Br. 11)* **CABARON**, Liberato T.; **DELA PEÑA**, Plenio B.; **MARAYA**, Crescente Jr. F.; **TANDINCO**, Filemon Jr. A.; **TORREVILLAS**, Manuel Jr. F. **(REGION IX) – *SIOCON, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE:*** *(Br. 27)* **CANDA**, Alejandro T.; **DAYOT**, Exequiel III M.; **BASTASA**, Ric S. **(REGION X) – *CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY, MISAMIS ORIENTAL:*** *(Br. 24)* **ALMAJAR**, Romeo A.; **AMOSIN**, Isidro I.; **BERNARDEZ**, Zaldah M.; **BOLLOZOS**, Gil G.; **CABARON**, Liberato T.; **CANOY**, Victor A.; **CONCEPCION**, Julius M.; **DAMASING**, Henry B.; **DELIMA**, Lorimer Sr. A.; **ESTRADA**, Benjamin P.; **GO**, James V.; **GUILING**, Antonio M.; **LLANDERAL**, Ma. Corazon Gaite Badilla; **MACATO-ON**, Solayman G.; **MARANGIT**, Sittie Gumama; **MUSNI**, Oscar P.; **PERFECTO**, Ma. Lourdes G.; **RAVANERA**, Manuel R.; **ROSALES**, Vincent B.; **SABANAL**, Isabelo E.; **SABATE**, Restituto B. Jr.; **UMPA**, Anisah Bagul Amanodin; **VALMORIDA**, Jo-Jac-Atom B.; **VICOY**, Dennis P.; **XENOS**, Dax G. ***CABADBARAN, AGUSAN DEL NORTE:*** *(Br. 34)* **CAÑETE**, Nemesio S.; **QUIWAG**, Toribio S.; **SALISE**, Hector D.; **XENOS**, Dax G.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT IN CITIES (MTCC): (REGION VII) – ***DANAO CITY, CEBU:*** **MENDOZA**, Salvador Sr. B.; **PITA**, Alberto C.; **RAMOS**, Josefa P. **(REGION X) – *OZAMIS CITY, MISAMIS OCCIDENTAL:*** *(Br. 3)* **ADLAWAN**, Armando S.; **BAÑOSIA**, Graciano T.; **FUENTES**, Sam Norman G.; **MANDIN**, Marleaf C.; **MURALLON**, Roy P.; **PANCHO**, Hyede Paulina Zapatos; **TAN**, Rico A.

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION III) – ***STA. ROSA, NUEVA ECIJA:*** **CALDERON**, Jose Manuel J.; **LAPUZ**, Zenaida Rifareal; **LINSANGAN**, Hermenegildo M.; **SANDOVAL**, Ronald DP. **(REGION VII) – *BARILI, CEBU:*** **GIMENEZ**, Benny Paterno L.; **VILLAHERMOSA**, Alfonso Sr. F.; **YBALEZ**, Elmergilio N.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION I) – ***CAOAYAN-STA. CATALINA, ILOCOS SUR:*** **GAGELONIA**, Edmund I.; **GALACGAC**, Marvin A.; **RINGPIS**, Rogelio A.; **ROSAL**, Pedro R. **(REGION III) – *MEXICO-SAN LUIS, PAMPANGA:*** **ASUNCION**, Damaso Jr. P.; **DALUMPINES**, Suzette Gallemaso; **SAGUM**, Lamberto G. **(REGION X) – *BALINGASAG-LOGONGLONG, MISAMIS ORIENTAL:*** **BANAN**, Romualdo I.; **DELIMA**, Lorimer Sr. A.; **GALLARDO**, Orlando C.; **RAAGAS**, Edmundo V.

The public may submit sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants **not later than AUGUST 18, 2006** to the JBC Secretariat.

All applicants to all JBC positions must submit to the JBC Secretariat ASAP via fax, mail or e-mail their updated JBC Form 1, current cellphone and landline numbers, current residence and e-mail addresses.

August 06, 2006.

(Sgd.) **MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA**
Clerk of Court
& Ex-Officio Secretary

(PDI–August 9, 2006)

The PROVINCE OF ILOCOS NORTE
CITY OF LAOAG
PHIL. VETERANS BANK
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
and the NATIONAL HISTORICAL INSTITUTE
join the nation in celebration of the
Centennial Birth Anniversary of
ROQUE B. ABLAN, SR.
August 9, 1906 - August 9, 2006
(Governor of Ilocos Norte and World War II Hero)

National Historical Institute

MESSAGE

The National Historical Institute joins the nation in commemorating the centennial Birth Anniversary of Roque B. Ablan (1906-2006), World War II Hero and public servant.

Roque Ablan y Blanco is an epitome of heroism and patriotic deeds. While the mortal remains of other heroic figures were given a hero's burial, those of our hero from the province of Ilocos Norte were never found and his fate remains unknown. He may have perished either in the battlefield or in a cold dungeon, anticipating the end. Only his memory has stayed with us through the years.

Today as we honor him, we remember the ultimate sacrifice he made for his country and we salute him with praises and offer our eternal gratitude.

Mabuhay ang mga bayaning Pilipino.
Mabuhay ang Sambayanang Pilipino.

LUDOVICO D. BADOY
Executive Director

August 9, 2006 marks the birth centenary of one of foremost Filipino patriots of World War II, Roque Blanco Ablan. Lawyer and outstanding public servant, he was born in Laoag, Ilocos Norte. In 1937 at age 31 he was elected governor of Ilocos Norte making him the youngest provincial executive of his time. He was re-elected in 1941.

When the war broke out, Ablan refused to cooperate with the Japanese. Together with Lt. Feliciano Madamba, he organized the Ablan-Madamba Guerrilla Group of Northern Luzon, which was recognized by General Douglas MacArthur's Southwest Pacific Area Command. Ablan was last seen in the battle of Bumitalag, Piddigon 5 February 1943. His guerrilla unit, however, continued fighting the enemy. His heroic deeds have earned for him an honored place in the country's history.

For his selfless sacrifice and dedication to country, people and ideals, August 9 of every year was declared as Governor Roque B. Ablan Sr. Day, a special holiday in the province of Ilocos Norte, by virtue of Republic Act 6941 dated April 4, 1990.

The two-day commemorative activities, which will begin on August 8 will be highlighted by the opening of exhibits, with Imelda R. Marcos and Ambassador Preciosa Soliven as guest of honor and speaker.

Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Jr., AFP Chief of Staff will deliver his keynote speech during the commemorative program on August 9. The event will be graced by special guests from the Diplomatic corps, DepEd and the national, regional and provincial government offices.

GENERAL PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES
August 8-9, 2006 Laoag City

Day 1

Drum & Lyre Competition
(Ilocos Norte & Laoag City Divisions)
History Quiz
(All Divisions, DepEd Redion I, II,& CAR)
Oratorical Contest
(All Divisions, 4th yr. Students, DepEd Regions I, II & Car)
Opening of Exhibits with Amb. Preciosa Soliven
as guest of honor and speaker
"Centennial Birth Anniversary of Roque B. Ablan, Sr.
The Hero with a mission; the public servant with a vision" By NHI
"War of our Fathers, A Tribute to the Filipino Freedom Fighters" by PVB

Day 2

PART I
SHRINE HONORS
(Unveiling of the Ablan Monument and Historical Marker & Floral Offering

PART II
PARADE N' TABLEAU
(Contingents from different LGUs, Schools, National & Provincial Government Offices, to be reviewed by Gen. Hermogenes Esperson, Jr., AFP Chief of Staff)

PART III
TESTIMONIAL PROGRAM
(Keynote Speech of Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Jr. AFP Chief of Staff and Guest of Honor and Presentation of the Gov. Roque Ablan, Sr. Commemorative Stamp and Medal)

PART IV
EXHIBITION
(Marching Band and Sky Diving by the Philippine Marine Band and 5056th Search and Rescue Squadron)

PART V
FRATERNAL LUNCH

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Rolando B. Fernandez

Germans help Aeta resume farming

By Tonette Orejas
Palauig, Zambales

AT THE FOOTHILLS OF THE Zambales mountain ranges in Palauig town, 20 Aeta people toiled the land, *bayanihan*-style, one Saturday last month.

The children carefully plucked out newly grown palay from the soil beds, tying these in bundles as big as their hands could clutch.

From a distance, Maning Paanan trudged behind his carabao, training the animal five times his size to walk in circles in his one-hectare farm.

Pulling the comb-like iron tool (*suyod*), the beast took out whatever weeds were left in the soil made soft by rains. Days earlier, Paanan's relatives and neighbors had removed the boulders, freeing every space for the palay.

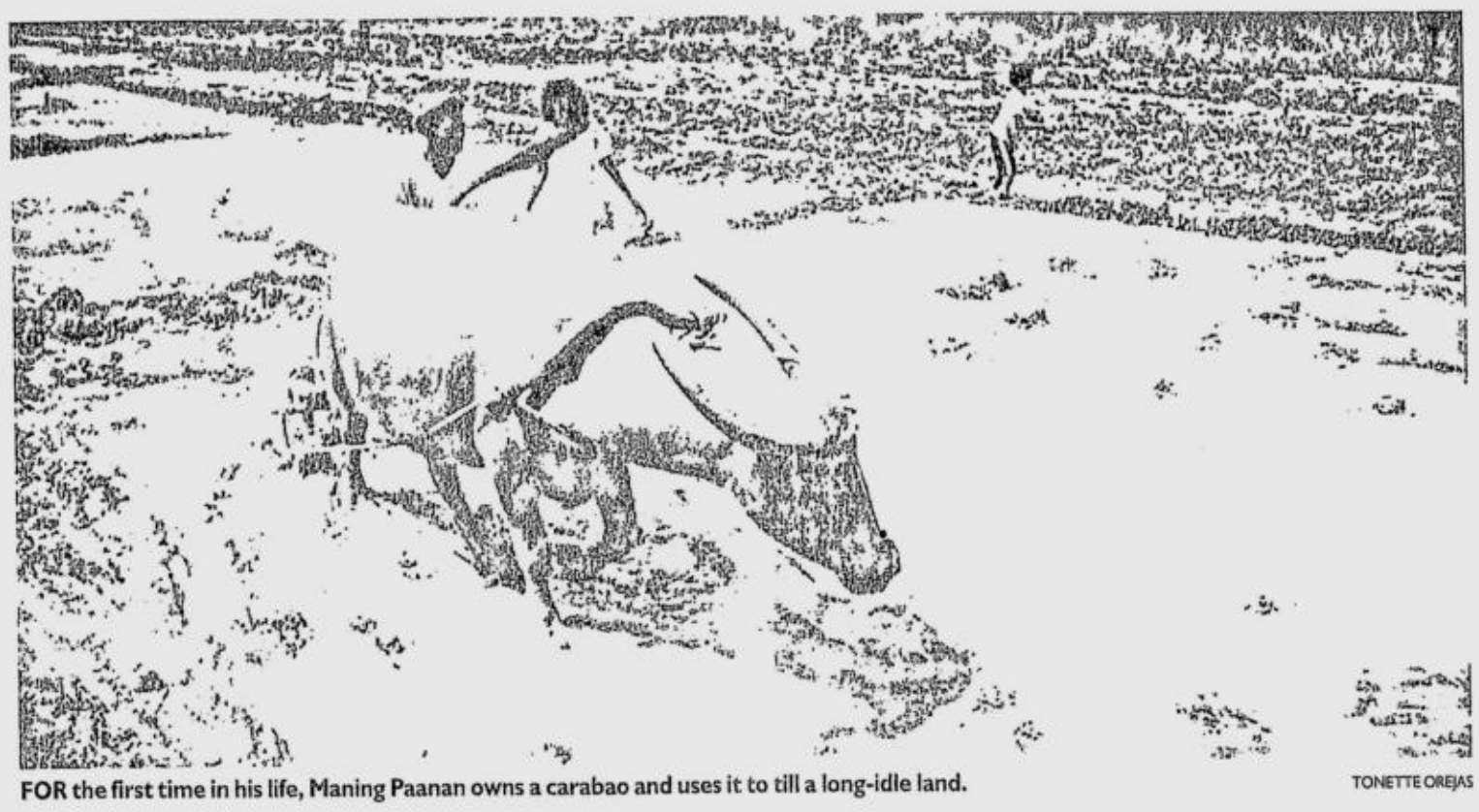
At every plot cleared, the rest of the tribe, including the women, moved in fast to plant the palay, enduring the backbreaking labor under the sun's searing heat.

This is no ordinary farming scene in Santa Marta in Barangay Pangulingan.

Paanan said that for the first time in his lifetime, he farmed using a carabao of his own.

Since he was strong enough to work on the land, Paanan (he said he was born during the time of President Diosdado Macapagal) recalled having to rely on his bare hands, bamboo pads or jungle bolo in making the *gasak* (mountain plots) productive.

For the occasion, his wife Lydia roasted a native chicken and cooked a big cauldron of rice for everybody else to share.



FOR the first time in his life, Maning Paanan owns a carabao and uses it to till a long-idle land. TONETTE OREJAS

HEINRICH Treutner, a retired German teacher, comes out smiling after joining Aeta farmers in planting rice seedlings. He raised funds in Germany to help the tribal people buy a carabao. TONETTE OREJAS

New chapter

Arthur Nasin, chieftain of 50 Aeta families who originally came from Sawang in Barangay Buhawen in San Marcelino town, said the carabaos signaled a new chapter in their story to rebuild lives from Mount Pinatubo's 1991 eruptions.

The animals, Nasin said, would make productive the 1.5-hectare piece of land that the government, through the Philippine Development Institute, gave to every family who resettled in Santa Marta in 1993. Their exodus brought them to as far as Palawan, living there for 11 months.

"We have land here but we have no carabaos so the lands remained idle," he said.

This plight, said Paanan, reduced them to being farm laborers for Ilocano landowners.

Getting a carabao meant so much for Sebio Pakawan. To him, this was like living an entirely new life.

Pakawan, his wife Mayli and their son Gerry were among the five Aeta people who survived the retreat in four caves (*leyang*) on Mount Maagui-agui in San Marcelino at the height of Pinatubo's major blasts. About 1,000 others were killed from the balls of fire and sulfur steam.

"For a week, my family and I lived among the dead. It took me a week before I could lead them out of the mountains. Every thing, even grass, was gone," Pakawan said.

Because they went through the same tragedy, Paanan and Pakawan, as well as Jimmy Sulit, Sonny Balenton and Carlito Palario, were not selfish. They shared the use of their carabaos with 21 other families.

The challenge now, said Nasin, was how to bring down the cost of production for seeds, fertilizers and irrigation fees.

Gift

Help came to a village living in abject poverty. The carabaos turned out to be gifts or "*spenden*," according to German donors. But this gift-giving effort started out unplanned for two foreigners.

Retired German teacher Heinrick Treutner, 70, usually came thrice yearly to Subic for scuba diving. In 2004, he met Dutch woman Irene Wesselink-Valenton, 44.

Settling in Subic in 2002 with her Filipino engineer husband and two children, Valenton on the side manages the Km 153 Pasalubong Café and Store in San Marcelino and chairs the civic group Lotus Foundation Inc.

Valenton agreed to tour Treutner around and to as far as Buhawen where the foundation held regular medical missions, together with Dr. Earl Yap, her brother-in-law and the health officer of San Marcelino.

They did not only end up meeting Anna Paanan, whose nursing study Truetner wants to support. They met Anna's father Jaime who, at that time, was worrying about having to sell his pig for his daughter's schooling.

Jaime, Valenton said, told her that if he had his way, he would rather have a carabao than a pig to work better on the farm.

Treutner, a language and economics teacher, lost no time to raise funds when he returned to Germany. There, he posted a story on four publications—Sonntagmorgen Magazin, Geissener Allgemeine, Giessener Anzeiger and Maz—about Jaime's need for a carabao.

The response, said Valenton, was "overwhelming." German readers put more than P200,000 into Treutner's bank account. From that account, the foundation gave the money straight to 11 Aeta who bought the carabaos and farm tools.

This scheme, Valenton noted, was an expression of trust and respect for the tribal folks. All that they had to do was submit an accounting of expenses. They need not repay the money but they should return the benefits of their farm work to the family and community, she said.

As a sort of tribute, they named the carabaos Henry and Heidi, after Treutner and his wife. A carabao is in Subic, five are in Palauig, another is in San Marcelino, and four are in Castillejos town.

More help coming

Meeting the Palauig recipients for the first time on Saturday, Truetner told them: "I will try raising more money for families without carabaos. I am convinced that this money will be a good investment for your families and your community."

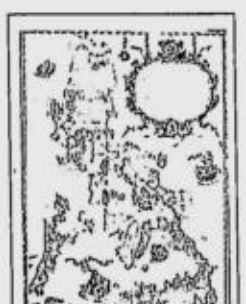
Hearing the translation in their language Sambal, the Aeta broke into happy smiles and loud applause.

Valenton, the "facilitator" of this Aeta-German connection, was herself filled with joy, expressing that in a community prayer led by a pastor.

"The blessings are many," she said. She said she had more reasons to be happy because the livelihood project had also helped strengthen ties and cooperation among the villagers.

Old Pampanga reached all the way to Cagayan mountains

OLD maps kept by the Center for Kapampangan Studies show the old Kapampangan region.



THE OLD PAMPANGA "EMBRACED ALL THE central plain north from Bulacan to the missions of Cagayan and its mountains" or 10 times its present size of 2,180 square kilometers, according to the 1903 Census of Philippine Islands.

Established by Spain as a province in 1571, local historian Edwin Camaya said Pampanga lost its former territories as the colonial government carved out other provinces from it.

Although evidence suggested that most of Bulacan, Nueva Ecija, eastern Bataan and Tondo were part of the Kapampangan region before the Spanish conquest, Camaya said the remnants of that region are in the present Pampanga, southern Tarlac, and some portions of Bataan and Nueva Ecija, where the Kapampangan language is still spoken.

Tonette Orejas

HOMETOWN *Trivia*

Name game

Some place names in the Kapampangan region (compiled by anthropologist Joel Pabustan Malliari).

After plants: Kalumpit (Bulacan); Botolan (Zambales); Mapaco, Pahu and Almendras (Concepcion, Tarlac); Anupul, Banaba, Culubasa, Kebaldugan Gandus, Dapdap (Bamban, Tarlac).

After land features: Kalangitan (on high plateau), Bana (swampland), Burak (mud), Marimla (cold), Sapa (river), Darabulbul (bubbling sound of flowing water), Balukbuk (bubbles), Matulid (straight), Angat (lift), Malutung Gabon (red soil), Telabangka (boat-shaped), Mabatu-batu (rocky terrain), Sapang Bato (lake of stones), Capalangan (black sand), Mexico (Makasiku or elbowing), Macabebe (along a body of water), Guagua (mouth of river), Pinatubo (allowed to grow).

Kapampangan place names in the Tagalog region: San Miguel de Mayumu (sweet or sugar) in Bulacan, Gabon (soil) and Capitanan (midnight) in Bataan, Taisan (grinding stone) in Batangas, Taklang Anak (child manure) in Batangas, Taklang Damulag (carabao manure) in Nueva Ecija, Mt. Pamitinan (used for hanging) in Rizal.

Indonesian connections: The Sumatran villages of Magalangan, Pora and Minjalin, and the region of Magelang bear similarities with the names of Magalang, Porac and Minalin in Pampanga.

Tonette Orejas

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN FOR LUZON
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Army priority: End of C. Luzon Reds

MEXICO, PAMPANGA—A TOP MILITARY OFFICER said the government, for reasons of symbol and as a form of psychological warfare, should first win the war on communist guerrillas in Central Luzon, where the communist movement was born.

"We will finish them [Communist Party of the Philippines and New People's Army] off right here. Thirty-seven years is long enough," said Maj. Gen. Bonifacio Ramos, chief of the military's Northern Luzon Command, as he spoke to officers and soldiers at the 69th Infantry Battalion headquarters on Monday.

Ramos said the CPP, NPA and its united political umbrella, the National Democratic Front, have regarded Central Luzon as a symbol of their beginning and strength.

"They have to be defeated in the region they consider most important. If they lose that symbol and bailiwick, the other regions will start crumbling," Ramos told the INQUIRER.

The CPP was founded on Dec. 26, 1968 in the boundaries of Tarlac and Pangasinan. The NPA was established on March 29, 1969 in Barangay Sta. Rita in Capas, Tarlac. From there, the revolutionary movement expanded to other parts of Central Luzon, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera, Ilocos, Southern Tagalog, Bicol, the Visayas and Mindanao despite government attacks during the martial law years, according to the book "Trinity of War" published by Nolcom.

Ramos asked soldiers to work closely with local officials and residents and win in the battle for people's support. "That will help you deprive the enemies of sanctuaries, potential recruits and resources," he said.

He stressed discipline in security as soldiers have increasingly become targets of attacks by the rebels.

Four soldiers have been killed while outside combat duty in Bulacan since 2005.

The deployment by Ramos of all the 10,000 troops under Nolcom to rebel fronts last week has come under fire from the fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas (Pamalakaya).

In a statement on Tuesday, Pamalakaya said it has asked Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. as well as legislators in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon to stop the deployment to "abate an emerging bloodbath and festival of killings."

At least 82 political activists have been killed while more than 40 others have been missing in Central Luzon since 2005.

Fernando Hicap, Pamalakaya chair, said De Venecia and the lawmakers must immediately pass a resolution demanding the pullout of troops.

Some 5,000 soldiers from six battalions and the 3rd Infantry Brigade are spread in the Central Luzon and concentrated in Bataan, Bulacan, Pampanga, Nueva Ecija and Zambales, Ramos said.

Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan, chief of the Army's 7th Infantry Division operating in Central Luzon, said he was positioning additional troops in four to five towns more.

The full deployment happened in the third month of the military campaign against communist guerrillas.

Armed Forces chief of staff, Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, ordered on July 25 the sending of more forces to the front lines to be able to provide a secure environment for investments in the five super regions announced by Ms Arroyo last month.

Central Luzon, as well as Metro Manila and the Calabarzon, comprised the Metro Luzon Urban Beltway linked to the Clark and Subic special economic zones that are envisioned as the best logistics hub in Southeast Asia. *Tonette Orejas, Inquirer Central Luzon*

EMPTY SCHOOL NINO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

Teachers find themselves alone, without their pupils, in a school in Bonga Village following the evacuation of residents in anticipation of Mayon's eruption.

PLEA
An elderly woman clutches a rosary as she prays for Divine intervention following the evacuation of thousands of residents due to the raising of alert Level 4 around Mayon. The alert level was raised as Phivolcs warned the volcano could erupt anytime.
NINO JESUS ORBETA/INQUIRER SOUTHERN LUZON

'Jueteng' run in Batangas by cop's associate

LIPA CITY—THE UNDERWORLD LOTTERY "jueteng" has been resurrected in most parts of Batangas province and its operations are being run by a coordinator who has close ties with a ranking officer of the Calabarzon police force.

Sources in jueteng in Batangas said the national coordinator of jueteng in the province now is a certain Lito "Bumbay" Guerra, who is from Cavite. He is said to be closely associated with a senior officer of the Calabarzon police whom the sources won't identify yet.

The return of jueteng in Batangas came as Lipa City Archbishop Ramon Arguelles came out in the open to denounce the go-signal given by provincial officials to small town lottery (STL), a government-sponsored game designed to replace jueteng.

The holder of the franchise to operate STL is a company owned by a close friend of Gov. Armand Sanchez. Sanchez has been endorsing the operations of STL after he back tracked from an earlier position to oppose it.

The governor is also now publicly against jueteng.

In a letter of protest, a copy of which was obtained by the INQUIRER on Tuesday, Arguelles lambasted mayors from the League of Municipalities of the Philippines in Batangas who requested for the operation of STL.

The bishop argued that STL, like any other gambling and vices, legal or illegal, only breeds a culture of corruption and moral degeneration.

"I appeal to the God-fearing members of the provincial board and other officials ... to desist from, or revoke the said decision," Arguelles said in his letter.

He called on all the provincial board members to drop their support for STL and other forms of gambling.

Arguelles said his call was consistent with the position of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines in denouncing and fighting all forms of gambling and vices.

Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon

Officials say Sariaya not 'NPA-infested'

SARIAYA, QUEZON—LOCAL GOVernment officials of this coastal town along Tayabas Bay have expressed serious concern over the negative effects that reports on communist insurgency in Quezon have brought to the local business climate.

"We have great things going to attract foreign investors in our place which could generate local government income and more jobs for people. But we're afraid that the prevalent news reports about the alleged heavy presence of NPA (New People's Army) in the province could negate the momentum," Sariaya Mayor Connie Doromal complained.

Sariaya Councilor Alex Tolentino described the peace and order situation in the community as "manageable."

"We don't have serious peace and order problem here even from the communist rebels. With our long and clean shoreline, our town is a good place for investment not only for tourism-related projects but also for other industries," said Tolentino, chair of the local council's peace and order committee.

Doromal also cited the negative effects of the alleged "concerted efforts" of vested interest groups to discredit the town as location of the Nation Granary Inc. (NGI), the new public grains terminal with 14 silos and a flat warehouse with a combined grain storage capacity of 200,000 metric tons.

Doromal described NGI as the town's "prized business investment."

"It now provides steady jobs to my people and adds income to the local coffers," she said.

"The company has been providing jobs for my constituents, especially when fishing is not good," said Talaan village chair Numeriano Dalangin.

Doromal said with the entry of NGI in the local business scene, other big foreign investments had also started showing interest in investing in the community.

"It's good that investors are now coming in despite these NPA reports and other unpleasant write-ups. Maybe, the business groups could not really ignore the fact that the town is a really a good investment location," she said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Cebu sees profits in Asean summit

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE HOLDING OF THE ASSOciation of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean) summit in Cebu will infuse millions of dollars into the province's economy.

Patria Aurora Roa, regional director of the Department of Tourism in Central Visayas, said the holding of a series of meetings during the Asean summit will help not only the hotels and resorts, but also other support industries such as those in the retail sector and food suppliers.

"This will have a multiplier effect on the economy of Cebu, in particular, and the Philippines, in general," Roa said.

She said a total of 10,000 persons will be in Cebu on various days to attend different conferences.

While the Philippine government will pay for the accommodation of the heads of states, Rey Fuentes, general manager of the Cebu Parklane International Hotel, said the estimated expenditure of each person attending the summit is about $200 each per day.

This would mean that for a one-day stay here, the 10,000 expected participants will be spending a total of $2 million.

Nagiel Bañacia, protocol officer of the Cebu City government, said the total spending will be not less than $20 million.

Recalling his experiences in attending summits and conferences in other areas, Bañacia said each person will be spending about $500 during their stay here.

Traders ask GMA to step into row over Poro Pt. port operations

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

SAN FERNANDO CITY—BUSINESSMEN operating at the Poro Point seaport here have asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to intervene in the standoff between the port operator and the Philippine Ports Authority (PPA), saying the conflict has adversely affected the conduct of business here.

They said while the conflict is ongoing, they have to pay demurrage fees (penalty for exceeding the allowed number of days for a vessel to load and unload cargo) while the vessels are docked at the piers.

The vessels of three fertilizer companies could not unload their cargo because the two piers at Poro Point were again barricaded by PPIC personnel on Monday night.

The appeal came following the regional trial court's issuance of a 72-hour temporary restraining order against the PPA's takeover of the operations of the Poro Point Industrial Corp. (PPIC) on Monday afternoon.

The vessels at the seaport started to unload their cargo on Monday following the PPA's takeover. But at 7 p.m. Monday, the PPIC again took control of operations at the seaport after the firm received a copy of the court's order.

The TRO was addressed to officials of the PPA, the Poro Point Management Corp. (PPMC), the Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA) and the Department of Transportation and Communications.

Judge Robert Cawed of the regional trial court here said the takeover of the port's operations by the PPA was "detrimental to the contractual rights" of the PPIC.

"To protect the rights of the parties pending due process procedures, let a 72-hour temporary restraining order issued against defendants and their agents who are hereby ordered to desist from the further infringement of [PPIC's] rights," Cawed said in his order.

Silverio Mangaoang Jr., PPA port manager, said he did not accept the TRO because he was not authorized to receive it.

"They should give the TRO to the BCDA or PPMC, not the PPA because we are just following orders," he said.

He said the PPIC was "disrupting public service with the TRO."

On July 26, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources earlier ordered the PPIC to stop operating the Poro Point seaport because of lack of environmental compliance certificate and alleged violations of environmental laws.

Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza then ordered the PPA to take over the port's operations, including stevedoring, arrastre, berth management and special services related to cargo handling.

On Saturday night, the PPIC barricaded the port area to stop the PPA from taking over their operations.

The businessmen said the fertilizer companies—Soil Tech Agricultural Products Corp., Yara Fertilizer Philippines and the Parafield Enterprises—have four cargo vessels containing about 1.4 million bags of fertilizer.

Femodin Arcangel, Yara operations manager, said the company was already paying $9,000 (not P9,000 as earlier reported) or P462,780 demurrage fee daily for three days because it stopped unloading its cargoes on Saturday.

"That's almost P1.5 million losses for us and we don't know when the conflict between the agencies will be solved," Arcangel said.

Yara had been docking at the North Pier in Manila in the last 10 months and decided to dock at the Poro Point only several weeks ago.

A VIEW of the Poro Pt. Port now being contested by a private contractor and a government corporation.
TOOTS SOBERANO/INQUIRER NORTHERN LUZON

Stubborn evacuees go back for books, feed pets

From page A1

"I hurried up and went back home because my son will take his periodical exams this week," the 29-year-old mother said as she headed back to the evacuation center after a quick trip to Barangay Mabinit in the shadows of the rumbling volcano.

Her son's books, pencils and crayons seemed more valuable than other things—classes, after all, had resumed for displaced children at the evacuation centers.

Dismiss danger

Others, like Agripino Balasta, just refused to leave, deeply attached to their homes and farms.

"We are used to this," he said, dismissing the danger. But if the volcanic activity worsens, he will flee the area.

"It is up to God," he said.

Troops fanned out across the slopes of the volcano to try to enforce a mass evacuation after Mayon on Monday night heaved with three more ash explosions, bolstering warnings by scientists that it was priming up for a "hazardous eruption," which could come within hours or within days.

Feeding the cat

Farmer Eladio Petsalosi said his children had evacuated but added, "I just came back to feed my cat ... I will come back occasionally. I have a television at home. What if it gets stolen?"

Brig. Gen. Arsenio Arugay, Task Force Mayon commander, admitted it was difficult at times to convince villagers to evacuate.

"Some people are really hard-headed. There was even a village official who told his constituents not to leave yet," he said.

Most of those who briefly returned to their villages were women who wanted to launder their clothes, feed their livestock, and get additional food and clothing for their children. Most of the men had been left behind to guard their homes.

Cramped evacuation centers

"We can't just leave our two pigs and chickens and other belongings unattended," said Steve Abellano of Barangay Buyuan as he fed his animals.

Some evacuees whined about discomforts in evacuation centers.

Rowena Nuñez, 39, said she and her three children were not able to sleep well. Eight of her relatives died in the 1993 Mayon eruption, which killed at least 77 people.

"I had to fan my children in the middle of the night because they complained of the heat and mosquito bites," she said.

Maricel Ayala, 22, said there were at least 20 people in every classroom housing the evacuees, and majority of them were children.

Glowing summit

In a 24-hour observation period, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology recorded 109 earthquakes while emissions of sulfur dioxide shot up to 12,745 tons per day.

The explosions were accompanied by incandescent ejections of lava and a brightening of the summit as hot ash and gas spurted out.

"This means there is more magma rising from beneath the volcano," volcanologist Ed Laguerta told The Associated Press.

Authorities have ordered the forced mass evacuation of an estimated 35,000 to 50,000 people living within the danger zone covering an 8-km area from the crater.

'I'm so nervous'

"My mother said that we would not evacuate now unless it's really urgent and there's a big eruption," 13-year-old Jennilyn Nantes said.

"I'm also nervous but I've gotten used to this situation. Mayon has been like that ever since I was on the first year of grade school."

As of yesterday morning, a total of 4,213 families involving 20,656 persons had been brought to 15 evacuation centers.

The evacuees represented 21 barangays from the cities of Legazpi, Tabaco and Ligao and the municipalities of Daraga, Camalig, Malilipot, Guinobatan and Sto. Domingo.

The biggest number of evacuees came from Barangays Mabinit, Bonga, Matanag and Buyuan in Legazpi City and Barangay Magapo in Tabaco City.

Not even the threat of a major volcanic blast could dampen the spirits of children in the evacuation centers.

Some made improvised toys out of rubber band and soft drink straws, while others played at "cooking" using dried leaves and stones.

Vicky Abellano, 53, thanked the local government after she received two cans of sardines, two eggs, two packs of noodles, a pack of coffee, and four kilos of rice as her family's rations.

But not everyone was happy.

Marcellana said she was told the meal packs they received—similar in quantity for both big and small families—were good for two days.

"How do you make that fit for two days? What happens to bigger families? We have lost our livelihood now that the volcano is erupting and we can only rely now on government help," she said.

A piece of bread

Some evacuees complained they did not any receive relief goods.

"My last meal yesterday was before 4 in the afternoon when we were brought to the evacuation center," Visitacion Diriada, 76, said. She said her breakfast was only a piece of bread given her by another evacuee in a nearby room.

"Now, our problem is what we are going to eat for lunch."

Cecilia Ogera, 48, said: "When we arrived here yesterday afternoon, we were asked to list our names on a sheet of paper. We thought that we would be given food rations but we were not."

Assistant social welfare officer Nory Homo said it was possible the evacuees arrived late in the afternoon or early in the evening and were not immediately included in the listing.

In some areas, the relief goods were enough for four meals, consisting of four kilos of rice, two cans of sardines, two cans of corned beef and four packs of instant noodles.

Ogera had another worry.

"I forgot to bring a sleeping mat thinking we would be provided with one. So I told my children to sleep on the cold classroom floor," Ogera said teary-eyed out of pity for her eight children.

Standby fund

Mayor Rosal asked the evacuees to be patient as everything was being sorted out.

Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzales said the P250 million in standby funds allotted by President Macapagal-Arroyo for the relief effort would be used for the relief not only of people in the danger zones but for other concerns as well.

"We are not only targeting zero casualties but would like to ensure that everyone is safe and secure in the evacuation centers," Gonzales added.

Mayon has been rumbling since February and started spewing lava last month.

Mayon will blow up

Chief volcanologist Ernesto Corpus warned the eruption was now entering a far more dangerous phase that could involve sudden and violent explosions of rock, ash and fumes.

"It is absolutely clear to us that Mayon will blow up. What we're seeing now is the shift in its activity from a quiet eruption to a more explosive activity," Corpus said, according to Agence France-Presse.

Provincial disaster coordinating council chief Cedric Daep said as many as 70,000 people might need to be moved if the eruption is accompanied by heavy rains that might mix with the volcanic ash to form deadly fast-moving mudflows.

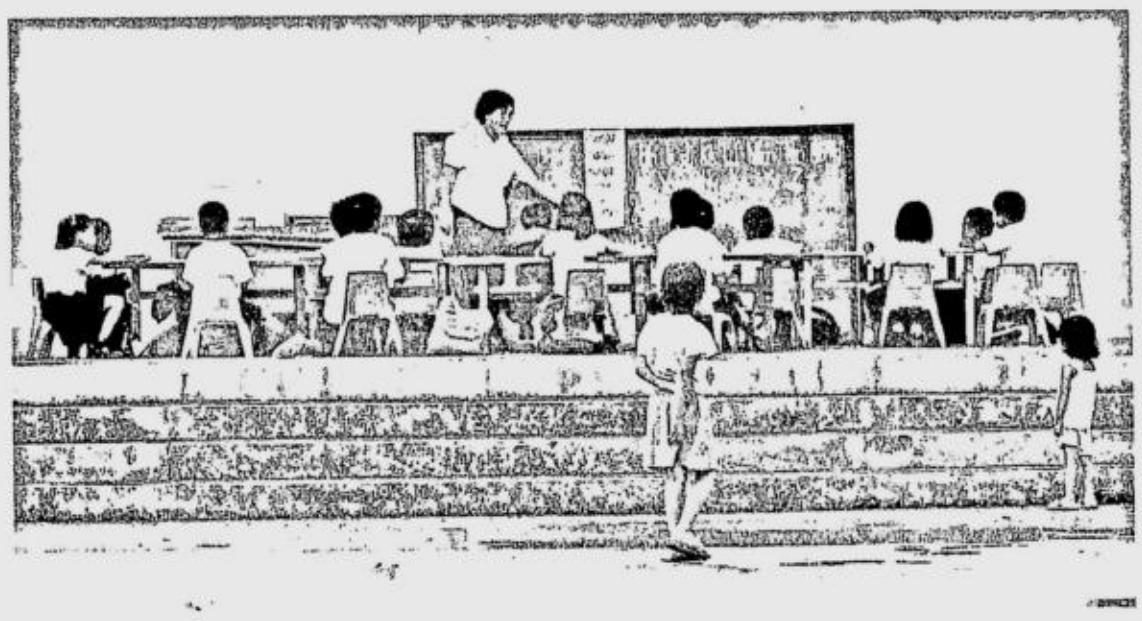
A brigade-sized military unit of several thousand soldiers and a fleet of 80 military trucks are enforcing the evacuation.

Laguerta said the lava column that began streaming out of the crater more than three weeks ago was now just 2 km from inhabited areas.

Greatest danger

But he said the lava column was contained within two channels and was no threat to people, although it was setting coconut plantations ablaze.

He said the greatest danger would be from pyroclastic flows, the superheated ash and other volcanic material that spurt from the crater and flow down the mountain's flanks at great speed. ***With reports from AP, Reuters, AFP***



LIFE GOES ON ... But classes at the Gogon Elementary School are held outside as evacuees take over the classrooms, 20 people per classroom. EDWIN BACASMAS

GMA asks evacuees: Don't tempt the fates, don't go back

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARroyo yesterday urged evacuees from Mayon volcano not to tempt the fates by returning to their villages while the volcano was still rumbling.

"We call on the residents not to flirt with danger by going back to declared danger zones and instead heed the advice of experts and disaster officials to stay out of harm's way," she said in a statement at a Cabinet meeting.

Ms Arroyo expressed confidence that government troops and relief workers were well-prepared for the imminent eruption of Mayon and that she expected all residents in the area would be brought to safety.

She reiterated warnings by volcanologists for residents to stay out of the 8-km danger zone.

Praise for Albay execs

"With the well-organized and effective handling of this crisis, we are confident of achieving a zero-casualty goal in this looming natural disaster," she said.

She praised local officials of Albay, relief agencies and the private sector for a "successful evacuation" of families.

Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

'Parish on air' story proves power of faith

From page A1

Their weekly show, "Men of Light," the only archdiocese-based television ministry of the Catholic Church using such a format, entered its 11th season this week.

And it is preparing to air its 131st episode on more than 40 satellite cable channels, including Dream.

Big leap

That's a big leap from April 2003, when the team started on just one channel, Infomax.8, and the show was aired only in Pampanga.

"Men of Light" is now shown in such places as the cities of Laoag, Bacolod and Davao, the provinces of Mindoro, Tarlac and Samar, and Asian hubs like Hong Kong and Macau—and enjoys constant requests for replay.

The Friday night taping sessions are done in a makeshift studio at the University of the Assumption in San Fernando.

According to Galang, the show survives on *patak-patak* (contributions), using donated cameras, editing machines and sets from the *kaparokya*.

Galang, 38, not only hosts the show but also handles the management aspect of the Archdiocesan Media Apostolate Network Unlimited.

Saving lives

Striking a balance between Gospel readings and reflections, and employing ordinary language filled with laughter from the priests, the show has helped pluck viewers from depression, aimlessness, even death.

Text messages compiled from the program's feedback system indicate cases of conversion, including a woman who ditched a plan to abort her baby, and a man abandoned by his wife who changed his mind about committing suicide with his son.

"There is something very philosophical about our ministry because we help people make sense of raw experiences. [We] help them process the experiences in the light of faith, the Scriptures, and the Gospel—and we consider that very empowering," said Bishop David, 47, the biblical theologian in the team.

"We're just giving [viewers] the tools to reflect on their experiences," he said.

Guerrilla medium

Efforts to make "Men of Light" succeed amid the commercial media make up a road map for other archdioceses that want to venture into the same ministry.

By the priests' reckoning, a good formula for sustainability is making the *kaparokya* own the ministry through various forms of support.

"We're introducing a new way of doing things," said David.

"We don't even have a radio network or a TV station. We're like a guerrilla mass medium. We make [the product] in a backyard and offer it, beg for airtime," he said.

David said cable firms continued to be generous with time slots—an hour at the most—because they had realized that such a show could command a steady following among viewers and, thus, help increase subscribers.

He said the show clicked because the team was operating not as a mere production outfit but as "a family and community that prays."

Free time, talent

Everyone on the team—the priests, Abaya and Buencamino included—shares their time and talent for free.

Parishioners make pledges of P2,500 per episode. Production now costs a little over P50,000 (to buy mini-DV tapes, reproduce DVDs, mail these to cable companies, and pay phone bills).

Post-taping sessions are like a feast, with donors providing food for guests and other visitors.

"We sort of edify one another and silently sort of outdo each other in generosity," David said.

The constant helping hands are "where we draw our sense of confidence about this [show] as a work of God," he said.

"Men of Light" is able to tap into the ABC crowd that can afford cable TV subscriptions. But for a start, it has drawn non-churchgoing Catholics who comprise about 85 percent.

To widen access, audio CDs of episodes have been aired over the Church-run Radio Veritas, Radio Maria and local stations for over a year now.

David, Galang and De los Santos, 48, also conduct spiritual retreats.

'The message we bring'

The priests project themselves as a *barkada* (gang) on screen.

David brings to the show his theology training, Galang his social action background, and De los Santos his parish experiences.

"It's not about our faces. It's about the message we bring. It's the Gospel. You can't pretend. You can't concoct information [because] it's about Jesus. That's why we are not so conscious about us," De los Santos said.

The effort to reach out is also seen in the set designs they choose, usually something ordinary where people get to meet and talk. (The latest season used a *sari-sari* store for a set. The next set might be a replica of a barber shop.)

Priests' best weapon

Abaya, who devotes five to six hours to each taping session, said the priests' "best weapon" was their "sincerity."

"It's more of the original reason why I like telling stories. It's a person-to-person [approach]. It starts as a personal function, then it becomes a personal commitment, and whether you like it or not, it will have a social impact," the film director said.

She added: "*Dapat* it begins with that. If you lose the person-to-person [touch], you also lose track of why you should detach from the big issues and hazards of the [movie and television] industry."

3-day weekend coming ...

From page A1

on his return home from three years of exile in the United States.

His death triggered a protest movement that led to the ouster of the Marcos regime during the People Power Revolution in 1986 and the installation of Aquino's widow, Corazon, as President.

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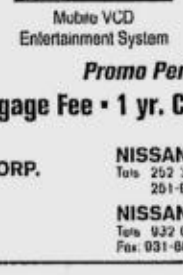
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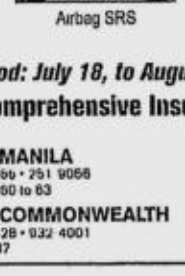
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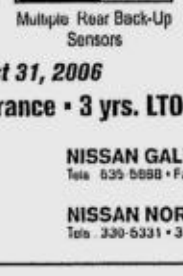
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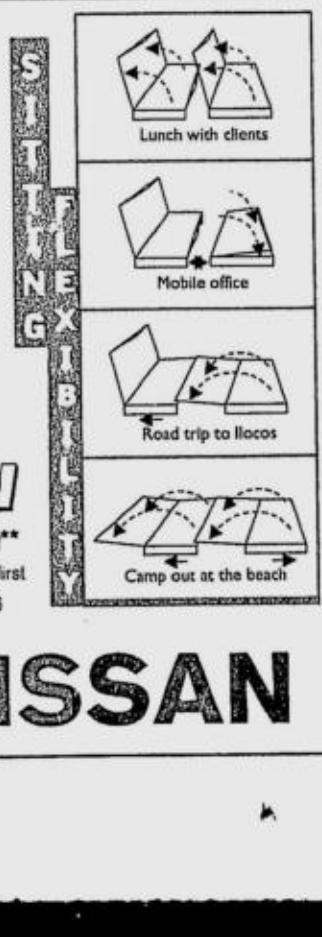

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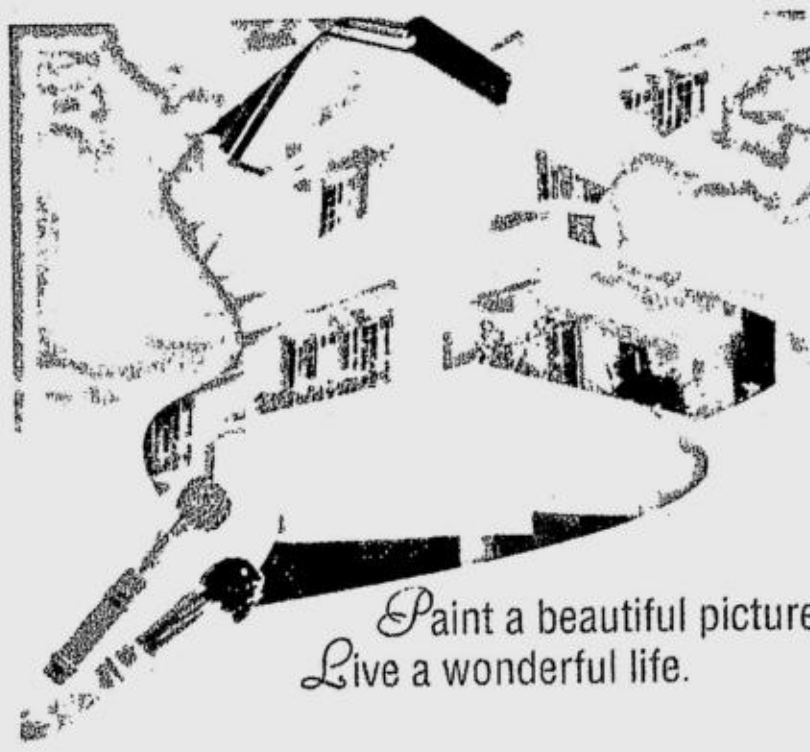


Boncodin: I haven't left Hyatt 10

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

BONCODIN

SHE WAS ELECTED, not appointed by Malacañang, to the Petron Corp. board, nor has she abandoned the "Hyatt 10" group which resigned en masse during the "Hello Garci" controversy in July 2005 and asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down.

Emilia Boncodin, the former budget secretary, yesterday made the clarification to "stop all these speculations" that she was back in the arms of the Arroyo administration.

Boncodin said she accepted the invitation to join the Petron board by its chair, Nick Alcantara. She is to serve as the independent Filipino director and chair of the audit committee of the former state-owned oil company that is now 40 percent-owned by the Saudi-based Aramco.

Alcantara is the brother of Tomas Alcantara, an adviser to the President.

Independent

"As independent director and chairperson of the audit committee, my duty is to serve in my professional capacity and not as a representative of any interested party, certainly not the national government. I have understood this to be so and that is how I intend to perform my responsibility to the company," Boncodin said in a letter clarifying news reports about the Petron post.

As independent director, Boncodin said she would not be representing either Malacañang or Saudi Aramco interests.

Boncodin said she welcomed the opportunity to serve in one of the leading private corporations in the Philippines, noting that Petron has been named one of the "Best Governed Corporations" in the country.

She explained that Petron was a publicly listed corporation. The appointment of an independent director is one of the requirements for listing in the stock exchange, she said.

The government owns 40 percent of Petron through the Philippine National Oil Co. The Saudi-based Aramco oil company owns another 40 and the general public the remaining 20.

Elected in April

She said she was one of about 200,000 small stockholders of Petron, owning 3,000 shares that she bought in the 1990s when Petron was privatized and are now worth about P12,000. The shares entitle her to become a member of the board, she said.

According to Boncodin, following the invitation from Alcantara early this year, she was elected by the board in April and in the stockholders' meeting last July.

"On allegations that I am returning to the government fold and have abandoned my former colleagues in the Cabinet who resigned last July 2005, I say firmly that I have no intention of returning to any post in the bureaucracy other than my present academic post in [the University of the Philippines]," she said in her letter.

Boncodin, who served for 25 years at the Department of Budget and Management, has returned to teaching public administration at the state university.

'Can't get away'

"I am convinced that sharing my experience in public life [with] young minds and drawing some lessons from that experience is the best that I can do to serve my country," she said in her letter.

She said she was still a member of the so-called Hyatt 10 group of Cabinet members: "How can I get away from that?"

Boncodin, the most low-key of the Hyatt 10 group, did not issue any statements about withdrawing support from Ms Arroyo.

"I made my resignation, I think it speaks for itself," Boncodin said in a phone interview.

Another Hyatt 10 member, former education secretary Florencio Abad confirmed that Boncodin was still part of the group. He said Boncodin consulted the group before accepting the Petron position.

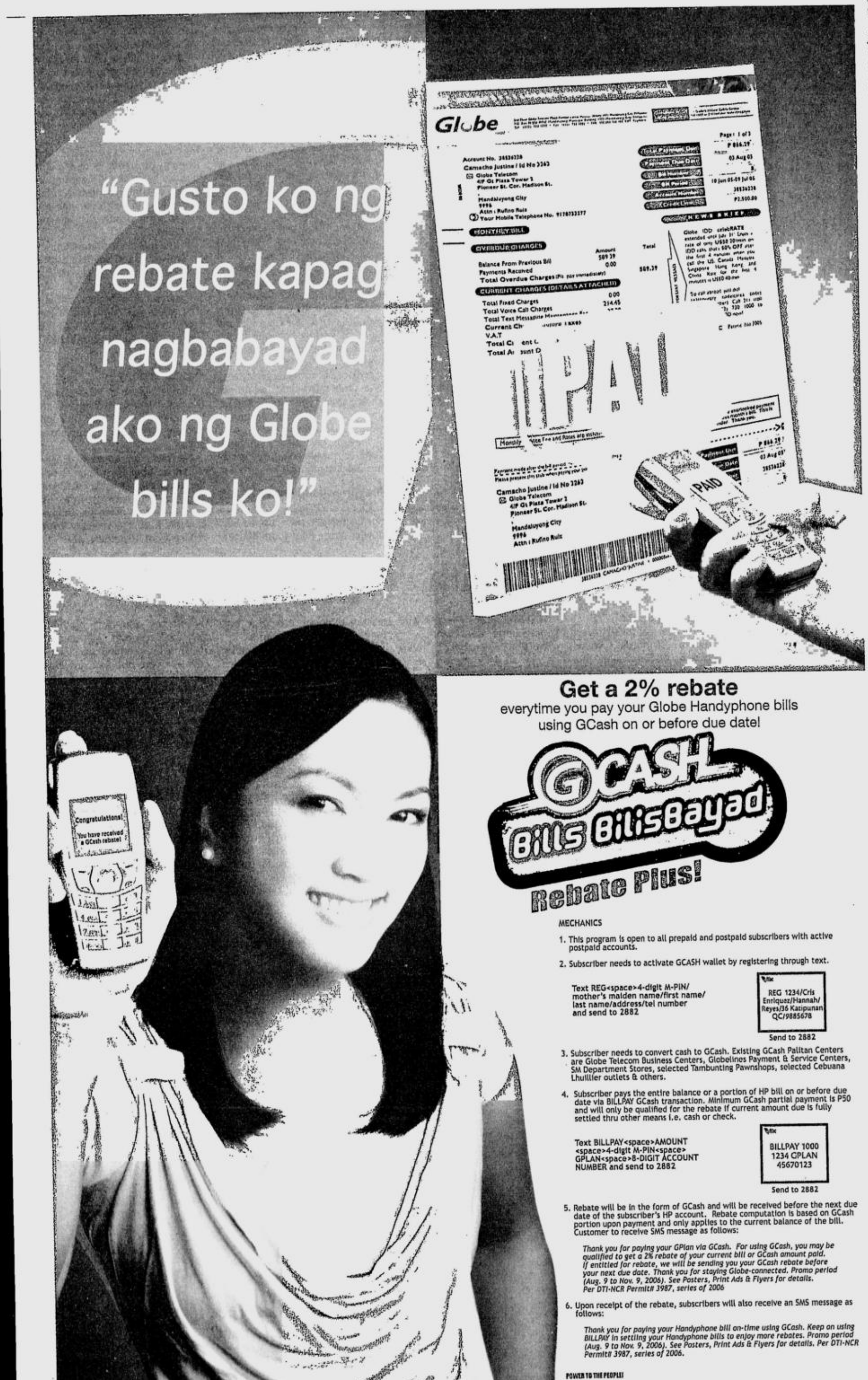
IN THE KNOW

PETRON Corp., a publicly listed company, supplies more than one-third of the country's oil requirements. Eighty percent of equity is shared equally by the Philippine National Oil Company and the Saudi Arabian company Aramco Overseas. Nearly 200,000 individual stockholders hold the remaining 20 percent.

Petron is run by its 10-member board of directors headed by Nicasio Alcantara, who is also the corporation's chief executive officer. Petron's president is Khalid Al-Faddagh. It has two independent directors, one of whom is former Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin.

Public companies are required by the Code of Corporate Governance to elect at least two independent directors to their board. An independent director is someone who (apart from his or her fees and shareholdings) has no personal, financial or professional ties with the corporation that may compromise objective performance. These "outsiders" are elected to avoid deceitful conduct in the boardroom.

Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research



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Prosecutors seek motion to inhibit Pasig judge in Roldan kidnap case

Another motion seeks recall of bail grant to ex-solon

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE JUDGE HANDLING THE kidnapping for ransom case against former congressman and actor Dennis Roldan has been asked to inhibit herself from the case.

In an eight-page motion filed the other day, the prosecution said it had "lost confidence in the impartiality" of Pasig City Regional Trial Court Branch 261 Judge Agnes Reyes-Carpio.

The prosecution also filed a motion asking the court to recall the order allowing Roldan to post bail. The motions came two weeks after Carpio allowed Roldan to post a P500,000 bail, to the dismay of prosecution lawyers. The victim's family and anticrime groups were also outraged by the decision.

Kidnapping is a nonbailable offense. But Carpio, in her order, said the evidence against Roldan in the year-old trial was insufficient to prove his guilt.

She, however, junked the bail applications of Roldan's five coaccused in the case. "A review of the said order in the light of the evidence submitted by the prosecution leads to the inescapable conclusion that they cannot expect a fair and impartial treatment from the honorable judge," the prosecution said in its motion.

Carpio quickly adjourned the scheduled hearing yesterday morning as a result of the motion. She gave all the accused 10 days to comment and the prosecution five days to reply to the comments.

Accused Romeo Orcajada, Adrian Domingo, Noel San Andres and his wife Rowena all agreed to submit their comments. Octavio Garces decided he would not comment on the motion.

Roldan will have to hire new counsel first, the court said, as his lawyers withdrew from the case six days after he was granted bail. In both motions, the prosecution said Carpio ignored the testimony of suspect-turned-state-witness Alberto Pagdanganan implicating Roldan in the kidnapping.

Pagdanganan said he took orders and funding for the kidnapping directly from Roldan.

"The judge surprisingly gave little or no credence to the same without citing any reason," the prosecution said in the motion for inhibition.

In her decision, Carpio said the testimony of Pagdanganan and at least three policemen who said

PROSECUTORS/ A20

WHAT'S INSIDE

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- **Manila taps students** as litter wardens /A20
- **Muntinlupa hikes** movie house tickets price by ₱1 /A20
- **Murder raps to be filed** vs 4 Indian nationals for ambush /A20

Mixed reactions from withdrawal

FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A year, Dennis Roldan showed up yesterday at the Pasig City Regional Trial Court without wearing a detainee shirt and handcuffs and with no police escorts and lawyers.

Six days after the court granted him temporary freedom, his lawyers Sigfrid Fortun and Karl Arian Castillo surprised many when they announced they would withdraw from the case.

Branch 261 Judge Agnes Reyes-Carpio, who allowed him to post bail two weeks ago, gave Roldan 10 days to hire a new lawyer.

Roldan arrived at the court room yesterday morning with his wife and children.

The accused, a popular action star in the '80s, declined to give interviews, simply telling reporters he was doing well.

Prosecution lawyers said the withdrawal of Roldan's lawyers would not affect the case, except to slow down the trial a bit.

But one lawyer said he was surprised by the withdrawal.

"A client would not readily let go of lawyers who had provided good service," he said.

Roldan's camp and his former lawyers refused to discuss the latest development in the case.

Edson C. Tandoc

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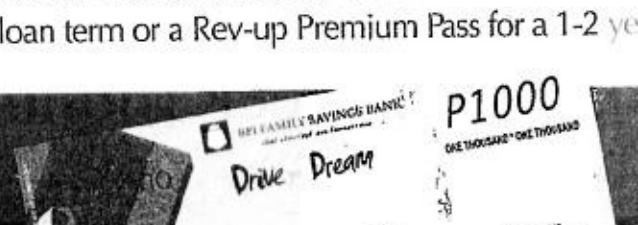

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Government plans to have full control of MRT

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MALACAÑANG PLANS TO TAKE full control of the Edsa Mass Rail Transit by buying out its private owners led by Fil-Estate Corp. and Ayala Corp.

The move aims to stop heavy financial losses resulting from fare subsidies and prohibitive interest expenses.

Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya told reporters yesterday that the Department of Transportation and Communication was pushing for the buy-out of Metro Rail Transit Corp. from the Edsa MRT 3.

He said economic managers were giving the plan serious consideration.

"If the government has to subsidize fares by that much (the current P12 fare is just a fifth of the ideal fare of P60 per passenger), I think the government will be better off taking over the whole thing rather than just pay the rent," said Andaya.

Apart from fare subsidies, Andaya noted that the government was losing heavily from rental, interest, and maintenance expenses.

Under the build-lease-transfer contract with MRTC, the government pays the private companies a 15 percent internal rate of return on their $179 million equity from 2000 to 2005; interest payment on the $500 million to build MRT 3 from 2000 to 2009; and more than P1 billion a year on maintenance and administrative expenses.

"We (the government) are practically paying for everything to run the MRT, so it's better that we take them (private firms) out and run the trains ourselves," Andaya said.

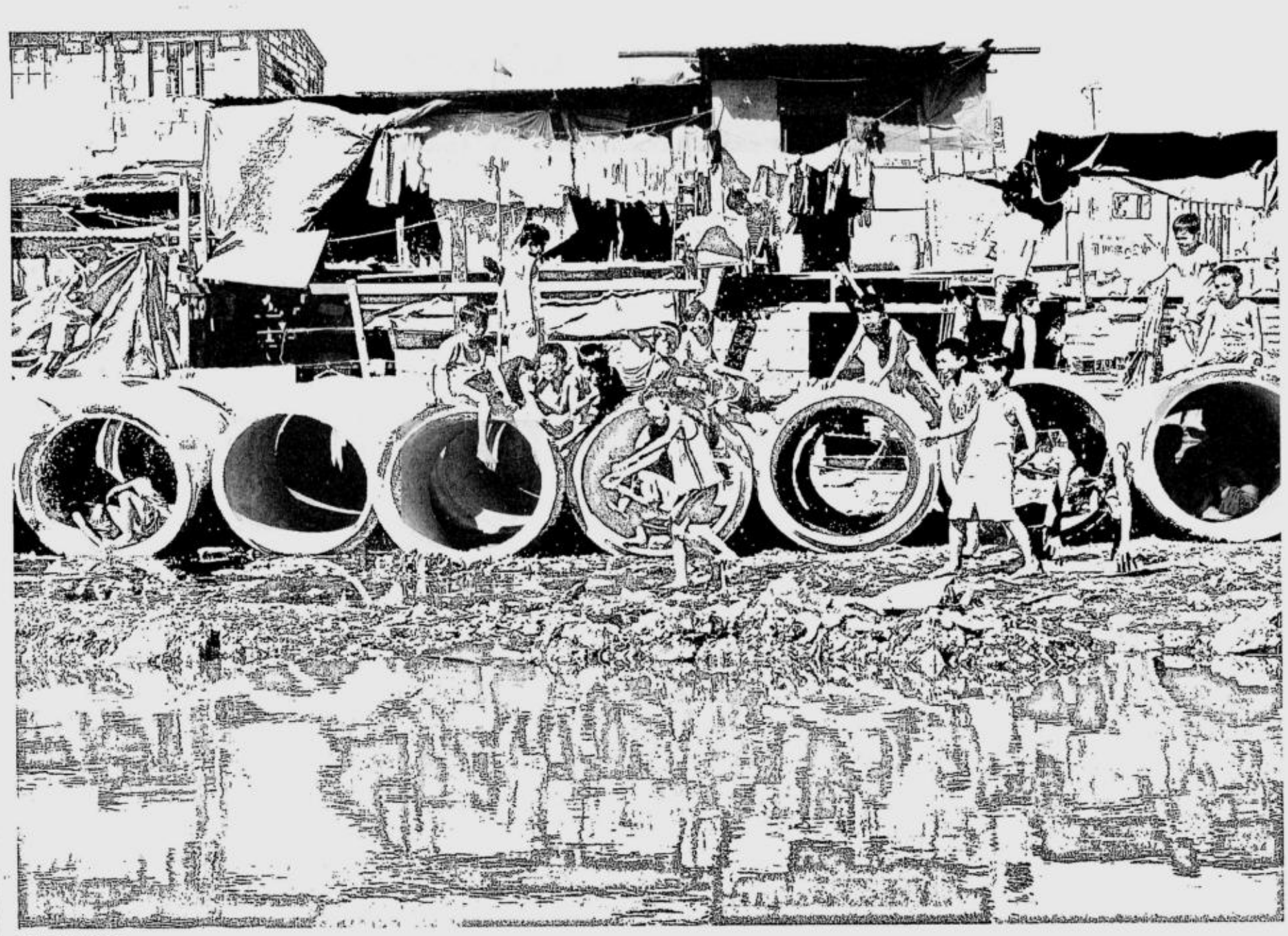
Although a buy-out would force the government to borrow money, Andaya said the government would save on interest expenses by borrowing from multilateral institutions that charged less than two percent in interest payment. Current lenders of MRT 3 charge between 7.5 and 15 percent annually.

Under the 2006 supplemental budget, the government has allocated P3.248 billion for subsidy of MRT 3, the bulk (P1.644 billion) going to maintenance, and equity rental (P1.23 billion).

Andaya said the buy-out could be made before the end of the President's term in 2010. The lease rentals to MRTC are estimated to reach $2.4 for the entire 25-year BLT contract.

While Andaya refused to say how much the government was willing to offer, reports pegged the starting bid at $600 million.

A year ago, President Macapagal-Arroyo issued Memorandum Order No. 181 creating an interagency committee to review the MRT 3 project, specifically its contract, commercial viability, and a possible takeover.



PLAY TIME
Children of Sitio Puting Bato, Navotas find a new playground in these culverts set aside by government engineers for a road-widening project in the area. EDWIN BACASMAS

₱1 more for movie tickets

By Jocelyn R. Uy

MOVIEGOERS IN MUNTINLUPA City will have to pay one peso more for each ticket they buy starting this month.

The increase will be used to raise the medical assistance benefits the city gives to its 27,000 bona fide senior citizens, City Hall announced yesterday.

The City Council approved an ordinance requiring cinema operators to increase the admission fee by P1 until Oct. 31, as their contribution to the Federation of Senior Citizens' Association of the Philippines-Muntinlupa Chapter.

Republic Act 7432 allows local government units to adopt measures and establish programs for the benefit of elder residents and their families.

Maricel Dacuycuy, head of the Office of Senior Citizens Affairs (Osca), said the ordinance would help the city provide funds for the "Dalaw Kalinga" project, where Osca personnel visit and provide bedridden senior citizens with medicines and groceries every month.

Initially, the Osca asked for a P2 hike.

Cinema owners later agree on a P1 increase because of the drop in the number of moviegoers, said the city's public information office head, Tez Navarro.

METROBRIEFS

Rainy day gear

RAINCOATS and flashlights are must-haves for policemen in southern Metro Manila. Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Southern Police District (SPD) chief, had this to say after conducting a surprise inspection—his first since he took office last month—of policemen on the National Capital Region Police Office's Night Watch program in south Metro before dawn yesterday. "I am happy to find out that they were in their areas of responsibility doing their jobs," Padilla told the INQUIRER yesterday. But a heavy downpour left some policemen drenched, prompting the SPD chief to suggest the provision of rainwear for the policemen. Apart from raincoats, policemen also needed more flashlights and search lights, Padilla said. Apart from going around Makati City's central business district to observe the chokepoints in the city, Padilla also monitored checkpoints near the Coastal Road in Parañaque City, the gateway of neighboring provinces to Metro Manila. "It is one way of preventing criminals coming from the provinces from entering the metropolis," he said.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Perfect for job

AGENTS and special investigators of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday welcomed newspaper reports that President Macapagal-Arroyo had already appointed Acting Director Nestor Mantaring as the bureau's permanent chief. NBI Investigators Mutual and Benefit Association Inc. (IMBAI) secretary Waldo Palattao, speaking in behalf of the organization's 400 members, said Mantaring was "perfectly suited for the job because he had risen from the ranks. Mantaring knows how to deal with organic and non-organic employees." Malacañang had officially named Mantaring as the NBI's acting chief last May. He had served as the agency's officer in charge after former NBI chief Reynaldo Wycoco's death last December. However, Palattao was ambivalent about the reported appointment of former Manila Police District Director Pedro Bulaong as Mantaring's deputy. The NBI IMBAI official stressed that for an organization to work well, the director and his staff should be cohesive in all aspects. "How can there be cohesiveness if the new deputy director is an outsider and he still has to learn a lot about the bureau," he said..

Margaux C. Ortiz

Not for play

A LAS PIÑAS City policeman was sent to jail yesterday for allegedly brandishing his gun while on board a cab in Muntinlupa City early yesterday morning. Police identified the man in uniform as P03 Virgilio Dolleton of the Las Piñas City Criminal Investigation Division. Apparently frightened by Dolleton, Tirso Mansalay, the taxi driver, sought the help of police patrolling the Alabang-Zapote Road when the suspect allegedly pulled out his .9 mm pistol and started playing with it. The suspect also allegedly hit in the face one of the apprehending officers, P02 Robert Valdera, the police report said. A medical certificate from the Ospital ng Muntinlupa showed that Dolleton was drunk at the time of the incident. Southern Police District Director Ricardo Padilla said criminal and administrative charges would be filed against the policeman.

Jocelyn R. Uy

Paco parish fiesta

BISHOP Teodoro C. Bacani Jr. D.D., will preside at the Paco (Manila) parish fiesta concelebrated Mass at 7 a.m. on Aug. 20. The rites mark the 407th founding anniversary of the San Fernando de Dilao parish and the feast of its patron, Our Lord of the Holy Sepulchre. Concelebrating with Bishop Bacani are: Parish priest Msgr. Domingo A. Cirilos Jr., Fr. Celso R. Alcantara, Fr. Solomon A. Jardinero, Fr. Luke R. Moortgart and Fr. Macario N. Sortido. The Aug. 20 concelebration winds up the novena of evening Masses at 6:30 p.m. from Aug. 11 to 19. Mass celebrants are: Fr. Antonio Cecilio S. Pascual, Msgr. Domingo A. Cirilos Jr., Fr. Ignacio L. Cañete, M.J., Fr. Cres Ubod, Fr. Cesar V. Buhat, Fr. Arnold Eramiz, Fr. Roderick L. Castro, Fr. Ronald M. Macale and Fr. Nolan A. Que. This year's Hermana Mayor is the Apostleship of Prayer led by its President, Ms Pat Catilo.

Manila mobilizes 'litter wardens'

By Tina G. Santos

MANILA HAS TAPPED THOUsands of volunteers from its city-run university in the campaign against litterbugs.

Called Litter Wardens, the volunteers from the Unibersidad de Manila (UdM) will go around the city to seek litterbugs, according to Hiro Masuda, director of the program.

The program, he said, aimed to maintain cleanliness and sanitation in the city, as well as to provide new avenues for youths to get involved in community affairs.

Masuda said the volunteers would be trained by the National Service Training Program, as part of the curriculum.

Mayor Lito Atienza, together with UdM president Rodrigo Malunhao, inducted the other day some 4,000 college students as environment patrol officers.

"They will serve as the city government's watchdog," Atienza said.

Among other things, the litter wardens will report on the status and development of the city's various service areas, including streetlights; cleanliness of streets and waterways, obstruction, illegal parking; and peace and order.

On weekends, Masuda said the litter wardens would participate in the cleaning of Baywalk, particularly the stretch near the United States Embassy.

"They will also do the rounds of the city's different plazas and ensure that these areas are free of litter," Masuda said, adding that the volunteers will also help in greening and tree-planting projects. Litter wardens will also visit establishments and check on sanitary conditions.

A litter warden will carry an identification card with a security tag from the city government. He/she will wear a mint-green shirt emblazoned with the "litter warden" badge.

The volunteers will not collect fines. Instead, an offender, who has received several warnings, will be referred to the office of the city mayor.

4 Indians arrested for murder, slay try

By Nancy C. Carvajal

FOUR INDIAN NATIONALS WILL be charged with murder and frustrated murder for the killing of a compatriot and the assassination attempt on another in Caloocan City the other day.

Supt. Napoleon Cuaton, the city's head of the police's investigation division, identified the suspects as Amardeep, Gurpeet, Pritam and Karnal, all surnamed Singh.

Cuaton said the suspects were identified by the surviving victim, Bhagwant Rai Bansai, head of the Khalsa Diwan Indian Sikh Temple.

Bansai and the fatality, Rajesh Kumar, were ambushed by at least 12 men along Susano St., 6th Avenue, Grace Park, Caloocan City at around 6:30 p.m. on Sunday.

Kumar was chased and shot by at least four armed men. He died instantly. Despite multiple gunshot wounds, Bansai survived and provided police the information on the suspects' location.

The four were arrested in their houses in Sampaloc and San Andres Bukid in Manila, and Poblacion, Makati. The motive for the killing and assassination attempt remained unknown despite the arrests, a police investigator said.

Police could not question the surviving victim further on doctors' orders.

FAMILY RADIO SHOW
The Christian Family Movement, the first family life organization in the country which marks its 50th year in October, invites families to tune in every Sunday to the radio program "Ala Una ang Pamilya" over Veritas 846, 846kHZ AM, from 1-2 p.m. Anchors for the show are Pip and Wilma Cua and Tita and Tony Kosca.

Prosecutors seek motion to inhibit . . .

From page A19

they saw Roldan in the safe houses where the boy was brought, was uncorroborated.

In its motion, the prosecution said there was "nothing in the rules and in jurisprudence that requires the testimony of an eyewitness to be corroborated before the same can become credible or believable."

The prosecution added that Pagdanganan's testimony remained "unrefuted" especially because Roldan did not testify before the court during the bail hearings.

At least 10 witnesses were presented during the bail hearings, including the boy's mother who testified negotiating with Roldan for the ransom through cell phone calls.

The prosecution wondered why Carpio gave more weight to the testimonies of Roldan's witnesses, including two of his co-accused who said they did not see him or hear his name mentioned during the kidnapping incident.

It also questioned why Roldan was granted bail while his co-accused were not when the prosecution presented "the very same set of witnesses and documents" against all the accused.

Orcajada, Domingo, San Andres and his wife are detained at the Pasig City Jail while Garces is at the Philippine National Police Custodial Center. Roldan's alleged girlfriend and alleged fellow mastermind, Suzette Wang, remains at large and is believed to have fled the country.

Speed of bird flu spread worries Indonesia

JAKARTA—THE RAPIDLY MOUNTING human death toll from bird flu in Indonesia—now the country worst-hit by the disease—concerns experts who fear the virus will continue infecting people until its spread in poultry flocks is halted.

The country's 43 reported human deaths in just over a year comes as the H5N1 virus spreads virtually unchecked among the billions of farm birds raised in backyard plots throughout the vast archipelago.

Indonesia became the nation hardest hit by bird flu after local tests concluded a 16-year-old boy from Jakarta's outskirts succumbed to the H5N1 virus late Monday. Specimens have been sent to the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for confirmation, said Nyoman Kandun, a senior health ministry official.

The country has racked up nearly a third of the world's fatalities in just one year, with the latest case surpassing Vietnam's reported 42 deaths, which occurred over a period of about 2 1/2 years.

Experts say the number of human deaths is a symptom of a much larger problem—the rampant spread of infection among the country's poultry.

"When you have trouble controlling infection among the chicken flocks, you are naturally going to see continuing infections among humans," Dr. Anthony Fauci, the US National Institutes of Health's infectious disease chief told The Associated Press by phone in a recent interview.

According to Fauci, the more bird flu spreads, the greater chance it has of eventually evolving into a strain that could cause a human pandemic.

"It's obviously a toll in human suffering, but it also continues to give this virus the capability of circulating," he said. "And the more it circulates, the more you have an opportunity."

Fauci, who visited Southeast Asia last year, said Indonesia had not shown the same aggressive approach as Vietnam and Thailand in tackling the problem in poultry.

Vietnam has not reported any human cases in nearly nine months and no poultry outbreaks this year, after launching a nationwide mass vaccination campaign in poultry last year.

Thailand—which has reported 16 deaths and is currently experiencing a flare-up—relied on strong village-based surveillance and mass slaughtering when outbreaks were discovered.

But in Indonesia, many local governments have refused to carry out mass poultry slaughters and vaccinations have been sporadic. One of the main issues is a lack of centralized control in a very young democracy.

Many powers once held in Jakarta were given to regional and community governments after the dictator Suharto was ousted in 1998. Funding and policy decisions are often at the whim of inexperienced officials, mayors and village heads.

The UN Food and Agriculture Organization is working with the government at the village level to develop local outbreak detection teams to snuff out poultry outbreaks before they can spread.

But progress is slow with limited resources in a country of 220 million people spread across 17,000 islands.

"It's a disgrace. We have the biggest problem in the world with avian influenza in Indonesia and yet the world is still not investing in getting a systematic control program in place," said Peter Roeder, an FAO expert in Rome who has worked closely with Indonesia. "What's Vietnam going to feel like if they get virus reintroduced from Indonesia?"

So far, about $50 million has been committed to the World Health Organization and the FAO for work in animal and human health in Indonesia over the next 18 months, the World Bank says.

Roeder said that full amount was needed over three years just to deal with the problem in poultry, which is endemic.

The H5N1 virus has killed at least 135 people worldwide since it began ravaging Asian poultry stocks in late 2003. So far, most human cases have been traced to contact with infected birds, but experts fear the virus—which remains hard for humans to catch—will mutate into a form that spreads easily among people, potentially sparking a pandemic.

In May, seven of eight Indonesian family members died after becoming infected with H5N1—the largest cluster ever reported. WHO said limited human-to-human transmission occurred. However, the virus did not spread beyond the blood relatives.

Amid international criticism, Indonesia's health minister recently said the country would make genetic information collected from virus specimens available for the scientific community to study. *AP*

US analysts say Castro era is over

MIAMI, FLORIDA—CUBA'S AILING communist leader Fidel Castro is unlikely to reassume the presidency he temporarily ceded to his brother Raul, according to US analysts.

"My opinion is he's never going to be able to resume his act," said Brian Latell, a former intelligence officer at the Central Intelligence Agency. "He'll never be back in the saddle. His era is over."

Another prominent Cuba expert, Jaime Suchlicki expressed a similar view, saying that "succession has taken place."

"Fidel Castro is not returning, and if he is returning, it will be in a ceremonial cap," said Suchlicki, director of the Institute of Cuban and Cuban-American Studies in Miami.

Cuban authorities insist Castro is recovering and would be back on the job within weeks, or possibly months, although they remain tight-lipped about his precise condition.

The communist leader, who turns 80 on Sunday, said in a July 31 statement he was recovering from surgery for intestinal bleeding and had provisionally ceded the power he held for almost 48 years to his brother and designated successor, who is also Cuba's defense minister.

Neither Castro's brother has been seen in public since the July 31 announcement, and US President George W. Bush said on Monday he too was in the dark about the communist leader's condition.

The analysts, speaking Monday at a round-table in Miami, said the question was now how long Raul Castro, 75, would be able to perform the job he inherited.

"He drinks too much when he is under stress and he's now likely to drink even more," said Latell, who wrote a book called "After Fidel: The inside Story of Castro's regime and Cuba's next leader." *AFP*

IRAQI men wail as they carry the coffin of a relative killed in a bomb blast in Baghdad. Three bombs exploded near the Ministry of Interior building on Tuesday, killing 10 people and wounding eight others. AP

US, Iraq bicker on tactics amid 24 killings

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—IRAQ'S PRIME minister sharply criticized a US-Iraqi attack on a Shiite militia stronghold in Baghdad, exposing a rift with his American partners on security tactics, as 24 people were killed Tuesday in a series of bombings and shooting.

An American soldier died of wounds sustained in fighting, the US military said Tuesday. Overnight, nine bullet-riddled bodies were found in Kut south of Baghdad, and four Shiites were shot dead by gunmen in Baqouba, northeast of the capital.

The 38 deaths—in addition to the 10 killed in a suicide bombing in Samarra on Monday—occurred as the United States launches a major operation to secure Baghdad to control Shiite-Sunni sectarian bloodshed that many fear will lead to civil war.

Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's criticism late Monday was delivered hours after a pre-dawn air and ground attack on an area of Sadr City, the stronghold of radical Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr and his Mahdi Army militia.

Police said three people, including a woman and a child, were killed in the raid, which the US command said was aimed at "individuals involved in punishment and torture cell activities." Three people were captured in the raid, the US military said without mentioning the deaths.

Al-Maliki, a Shiite, said he was "very angered and pained" by the operation, warning that it could undermine his efforts toward national reconciliation.

"Reconciliation cannot go hand in hand with operations that violate the rights of citizens this way," al-Maliki said in a statement on government television. "This operation used weapons that are unreasonable to detain someone—like using planes."

He apologized to the Iraqi people for the operation and said "this won't happen again."

Hours after he spoke, central Baghdad was shaken early Tuesday by three near-simultaneous bomb explosions near the Ministry of Interior building in the Al-Nahda neighborhood. Ten civilians were killed and eight people were injured, according to police.

A few hours later, two roadside bombs exploded in the main Shurja market in central Baghdad within minutes of each other, killing 10 people and injuring 50, according to another police report.

At about the same time, gunmen stormed a bank in Baghdad and killed two guards and a customer. They drove away with an unknown amount of money. Also Tuesday, two roadside bombs in Tikrit, north of Baghdad, killed a policeman.

On Monday, President Jalal Talabani, a Kurd, met with the top US commander in Iraq, Gen. George W. Casey Jr., to discuss security operations in Baghdad. Talabani said he told Casey "it is in no one's interest to have a confrontation" with al-Sadr's movement. *AP*

Burmese uprisings recalled

RANGOON—HUNDREDS OF former student activists quietly commemorated Tuesday, the 18th anniversary of prodemocracy uprisings in Burma (Myanmar), which propelled Aung San Suu Kyi into the political limelight and cost thousands of lives.

More than a dozen plainclothes security officers observed and videotaped a religious ceremony at a Buddhist monastery in Burma's largest city Rangoon (Yangon), which was attended by former student activists who protested in 1988, veteran politicians and members of Suu Kyi's party, the National League for Democracy.

The ruling junta, fearful of demonstrations, beefed up security in Rangoon, and expanded a roadblock outside Suu Kyi's home, where she has been confined for more than 10 of the past 17 years. She was last detained in May 2003 after her motorcade was attacked in northern Burma by a projunta mob.

On Aug. 8, 1988, demonstrations against the 26-year military dictatorship spread across the country.

The protests saw the downfall of Ne Win, but a new crop of generals seized power in September 1988 after brutally crushing the nationwide demonstrations.

The military used massive armed force, gunning down crowds and arresting protesters. An estimated 3,000 people died.

Nearly 200 people, including many who participated in the 1988 demonstrations, attended Tuesday's ceremony. They offered meals and robes to the Buddhist monks who said prayers. *AP*

Thai PM backtracks on promised free cows

BANGKOK—THAILAND'S EMBATTLED prime minister on Tuesday said he would not be handing out free cows and land deeds during a trip through the rural heartland because he did not want to be accused of violating election law.

Eager to court vital countryside voters ahead of the Oct. 15 elections, Thaksin had planned to give away 100 cows, 300 land deeds and 5,400 bicycles among other freebies paid for out of the government till during a three-day tour of northern Thailand.

Thaksin's campaign tour, which started Monday, was widely criticized by the opposition and academics as paying off voters. The prime minister has defended it as part of his program to end poverty, noting that offering handouts to the have-nots has long been his policy.

"Populist policies work but I have to cancel the plans to give things away to people," Thaksin told reporters, adding sarcastically, "My opponents are keeping an eye on me—they might sue me for violating election law."

Thai election law bars politicians from making handouts to voters while campaigning.

An election decree, kicking off the official campaign period, takes effect on Aug. 24 but certain actions committed before then could still be considered in violation of election law.

A movement to oust Thaksin because of alleged corruption and abuse of power was launched earlier this year. He dissolved parliament and called an election for April 2 in an effort to reaffirm his mandate after a landslide victory last year.

The April polls were boycotted by the three parliamentary opposition parties and later declared null and void by the courts.

Thaksin rerouted parts of his tour on Monday to avoid protesters in a northeastern province. *AP*

Unsealed files detail US atrocities in Vietnam

LOS ANGELES—ATROCITIES against civilians and prisoners by US Army soldiers during the Vietnam War were more common than originally disclosed to the public, according to a Los Angeles Times review of recently unsealed government files.

Some 9,000 pages of archives—the largest collection of documents on war crimes in Vietnam—include sworn witness testimony, investigative files and status reports for top military brass that detail 320 wartime atrocities substantiated by the Army.

Still, few soldiers were held accountable for the war crimes, according to the newspaper.

The abuses were not restricted to one rogue Army division, but were committed by soldiers in every Army division operating in Vietnam, the Times reported Sunday.

Among the incidents documented in the files:

- Seven civilian massacres from 1967 to 1971 that left at least 137 dead.
- Seventy-eight additional attacks on unarmed civilians that left at least 57 dead, 56 wounded and 15 sexually assaulted.
- 141 incidents in which US soldiers tortured civilian detainees and prisoners of war.

In one incident detailed in the report, members of one company in February 1968 rounded up and gunned down a group of villagers that included women and children after being ordered by a lieutenant to "kill anything that moves."

The files, collected by a Pentagon task force in the 1970s, do not include the most notorious US atrocity—the 1968 My Lai massacre. The atrocity, which left some 500 Vietnamese villagers dead, was exposed by reporter Seymour Hersh the following year.

Retired Brig. Gen. John H. Johns, who was part of the task force that gathered the files, said he no longer thought the atrocities should remain in the dark.

"We can't change current practices unless we acknowledge the past," said Johns, 78.

The files show investigators found enough evidence to charge 203 soldiers with crimes related to the mistreatment of Vietnamese civilians and prisoners. But only 57 soldiers were court-martialed and 23 convicted, the Times reported.

Fourteen soldiers received prison sentences ranging from six months to 20 years, but most served much less time.

A former legal adviser to the Army's Criminal Investigation Division said there was scarce interest in prosecuting Vietnam War crimes after the war. *AP*

A NEWLY born panda in China's Sichuan province. REUTERS

Giant panda gives birth to giant cub

BEIJING—A GIANT PANDA IN China has given birth to the heaviest cub born in captivity after the longest period in labor and elsewhere twin pandas each gave birth to twins, Xinhua news agency reported.

Six-year-old Zhang Ka delivered the baby on Monday at the Wolong Giant Panda Research Center in the mountainous southwest, Xinhua said.

The cub weighed just 218 grams (half a pound), but was still the heaviest panda ever born in captivity, where most cubs are born at between 83 and 190 grams, Xinhua said.

"It is very rare for them to be even near 200 grams," it said in a report late on Monday.

But the size and the fact that it was Zhang Ka's first meant a "painstaking and eventful" birth for the mother, who was born in the wild.

"The whole process lasted about 34 hours and was the longest in the history of panda reproduction," Xinhua quoted Zhang Hemin, head of the Wolong center, as saying.

Both mother and baby were doing well, the agency said.

Two twin panda sisters, also aged 6, gave birth to two pairs of twin male cubs—with much less drama—on Sunday and Monday respectively in the Chengdu Giant Panda Reproduction and Research Center near Wolong, Xinhua said. *Reuters*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Lebanon rejects Bush's ceasefire plan

Israel claims killing 15 guerrillas in south

BEIRUT, LEBANON—THE LEBANESE PRIME minister rejected a UN ceasefire plan backed by President George W. Bush, demanding that Israel immediately pull out from southern Lebanon even before a peacekeeping force arrives to act as a buffer between Hezbollah and the Jewish state.

Fighting continued Tuesday between Hezbollah guerrillas and Israeli forces in south Lebanon near the border with Israel. One Israeli soldier was killed and five others wounded in clashes in Bint Jbail, the Israeli Army said.

Fighting in Bint Jbail, in the southeast corner of Lebanon, also killed fifteen guerrillas, the military said. Hezbollah was not immediately available for comment but has rarely announced casualties in the fighting that erupted nearly a month ago.

Hezbollah TV, Al-Manar, claimed the guerillas had inflicted casualties on Israeli forces near the Mediterranean city of Naqoura, some 4 km north of the border. The Israeli Army confirmed that clashes occurred in the western sector and that there were casualties, but did not say which side had suffered the losses or give the location of the incidents.

Prime Minister Fuad Saniora's stand, delivered Monday in a tearful speech to Arab foreign ministers, came on a day in which 49 Lebanese were killed—one of the deadliest days for Lebanese in nearly four weeks of fighting.

His Cabinet, which includes two Hezbollah ministers, voted unanimously to send 15,000 troops to stand between Israel and Hezbollah should a ceasefire take hold and Israeli forces withdraw south of the border. The move was an attempt to show that Lebanon has the will and ability to assert control over its south, which is run by Hezbollah, the powerful Shiite Muslim militia backed by Syria and Iran.

In Texas, Bush said any ceasefire must prevent Hezbollah from strengthening its grip in southern Lebanon, asserting "it's time to address root causes of problems." He urged the United Nations to work quickly to approve a US-French draft resolution to stop the hostilities.

Clashes between Israel and Hezbollah have sharply intensified in recent days as ceasefire diplomacy gains traction after nearly a month of unproductive talks. The ceasefire plan now under scrutiny at the United Nations has drawn only lukewarm support in Israel and vilification in the Arab world. Neither Israel nor Hezbollah has found an incentive to stop fighting, and both may be trying to gain advantage on the ground before a ceasefire.

At least 52 people died Monday on both sides. Hezbollah fired 160 rockets, wounding five Israelis, police and rescue services said. Three Israeli soldiers were killed in combat in south Lebanon, the first in an exchange of fire with Hezbollah fighters and the two others by an antitank missile, the Israeli Army said.

With Arab League foreign ministers assembled around a horseshoe table, the embattled Lebanese leader repeatedly interrupted his opening address to gather his composure and wipe away tears. The foreign ministers cast their eyes downward in apparent embarrassment.

But Saniora's impassioned appeal did not change minds in Israel, where hospitals in the war zone were working around the clock and under rocket fire to protect patients from harm—in some cases moving them into a basement. The defense minister threatened an expanded ground operation if diplomacy does not produce results soon. *AP*

BANGLADESHI students (left photo) hold antiwar placards during a demonstration in Dhaka, as a Lebanese civilian (right photo) ponders his nation's future near the debris of a collapsed building following an Israeli air strike in Beirut on Aug. 8. AFP

Indonesian fighters join Hezbollah

JAKARTA, INDONESIA—A hardline Islamic group in Indonesia claimed Tuesday that 20 of its members had traveled to Lebanon to join the fight against Israel.

It was not possible to independently verify the claim by the Islamic Defenders Front. Similar claims by hardline groups in Indonesia in recent years have proved to be false.

Islamic Defenders Front spokesperson Soleh Mahmud said the 20 men left Indonesia five days ago and were now undergoing training in Lebanon under the supervision of Hezbollah guerillas.

"They are ready to die to defend Muslims," Mahmud told The Associated Press.

He said his group planned to send more fighters if it could raise more funds.

The Islamic Defenders Front is mostly known for vandalizing nightclubs it considers un-Islamic or throwing stones at Western embassies. Its members have also been accused of extorting money from bar owners. *AP*

At least 15 nations willing to send troops for UN force

VIENNA, AUSTRIA—ACROSS the globe, at least 15 nations are considering sending troops to an eventual UN-mandated international "stabilization force" in southern Lebanon—including Malaysia, Indonesia and Norway.

But scores of others—skittish about a potential Middle East quagmire or already stretched thin elsewhere, such as the United States and Britain—have ruled out sending soldiers.

And over the whole enterprise hangs a huge Catch-22: Israel refuses to leave until the force is in place, and nations won't go in until a ceasefire is in effect.

"We do not want foreign troops to commit suicide by entering Lebanon under the current situation," said Syed Hamid Albar, the foreign minister of Malaysia, which has 1,000 soldiers on standby.

That accounts for the wait-and-see approach adopted by many nations. Diplomats are preoccupied with pushing through a UN resolution aimed at ending nearly a month of fighting before they tackle the question of a multinational force.

The 15 countries willing in principle to deploy forces—provided they get a strong UN mandate with clear rules of engagement—are Australia, Brazil, Chile, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Lithuania, Malaysia, Nigeria, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Spain and Turkey. There is also Poland, which already has 200 soldiers serving as UN peacekeepers in Lebanon and has said it's inclined to keep them there.

Three of the 15 nations have offered specifics of what they're ready to commit: Malaysia, which says its 1,000-strong contingent would be backed by armored vehicles; Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim nation, which has offered a battalion of about 800 men; and Norway, which has pledged a squadron of nearly 100 marines and four missile torpedo boats.

Sizable troop contributions could come from Italy, which last month promised a "substantial contribution"; Turkey, which has experience leading UN peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan and Somalia; and France, which already has about 1,300 personnel and several frigates in the area.

"I don't foresee any more than 5,000 French in the zone," said Cmdr. Jerome Erulin, a French military spokesperson, cautioning that it was too early to determine his nation's role. Five thousand "would be the high end of the range," he said.

Speculation on who might command a multinational force in southern Lebanon has centered on Turkey and France.

A daunting tangle of potential complications threatens to bedevil the international effort even before it gets under way. *AP*

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SPORTS

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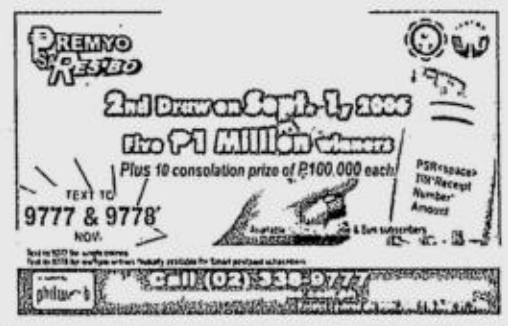

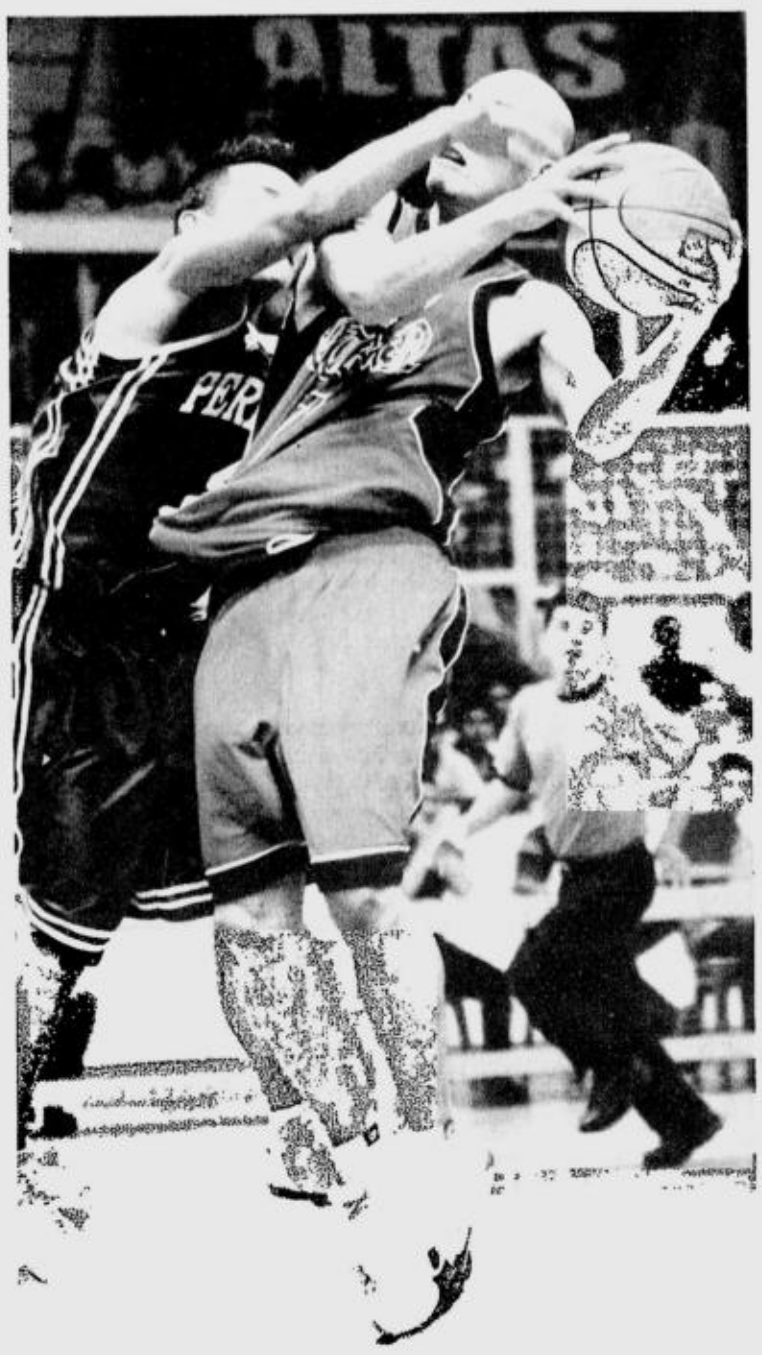

Focused Lions shoot for Final Four berth

SAN BEDA COACH KOY BANAL knows there's a fine line between confidence and overconfidence. And he doesn't want the Lions to cross it during the crucial stages of the NCAA men's basketball tournament.

Boasting a seven-game winning streak, the Lions will shoot for an outright Final Four berth against the struggling St. Benilde Blazers at 2 p.m. today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

"We're confident, but we can't be overconfident because it might backfire on us," said Banal.

Banal dismisses the notion that it will be another easy contest for the heavily favored Lions.

The Blazers, who bowed to the Lions in a 71-57 rout in the first round, has since dropped out of semifinal contention.

STANDINGS	W	L
San Beda	8	1
Letran	8	1
PCU	7	2
Mapua	5	4
S. Sebastian	3	6
Perpetual	2	7
Jose Rizal	2	7
St. Benilde	1	8

GAMES TODAY
(Ninoy Aquino Stadium)
12 noon—St. Benilde vs San Beda (Jrs/Srs)
4 p.m.—San Sebastian vs PCU (Srs/Jrs)

"It's really tough when you face a team that plays without any pressure," noted Banal. "We have to continue working hard."

The Philippine Christian U Dolphins will also try to sustain their strong showing against the San Sebastian Stags at 4 p.m.

"The players are responding very well," said coach Joel Dualan after the Dolphins nipped the Blazers, 79-70, for a 7-2 record. "We hope it doesn't change, because our other players are starting to deliver."

While the Dolphins have been banking on their reserves lately, the Lions have rolled through their victories with junior forward Yousif Aljamal and Nigerian Sam Ekwe at the helm.

Asserting his leadership this season, the veteran Aljamal averages a team-high 14.4 points.

The 6-foot-8 Ekwe also remains a dominant force inside and posted a rare triple-double of 10 points, 13 rebounds and 11 blocks against the Jose Rizal Bombers last week.

"We wanted to stay in the top two, we wanted to maintain our winning attitude," said Banal. "There's a sense of urgency for us because we have something to achieve this season. We know the games get crucial."

Also delivering solid plays for the Lions are rookie Pong Escobal and Rogemar Menor, who will be back after serving a one-game suspension.

Gabby Espinas and Jason Castro remain at the forefront of the Dolphins' campaign, but the team also got a huge boost from forward Lei Navarro in their victory over the Blazers. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Scorpions pull rug from under Titans

CENTRO ESCOLAR UNIVERSITY BROUGHT down AMA Computer University, 58-55, Sunday to forge a two-way tie for third place in the 2006 Naascu men's basketball tournament at the UM gym.

Deo Carillo and Eddie Camacho provided the 1-2 scoring punch for the Scorpions, who chalked up their third win in five games while dealing the Titans their first loss in four outings.

Carillo scored 16 points followed by Camacho with 11 points.

In women's play, last year's runner-up CEU completed a double celebration by beating defending champion AMA, 54-49.

Michelle Simmerman finished with 19 points, while Angelica Leano added 15 for the Lady Scorpions.

Overshadowed by CEU's twin kill were San Sebastian College-Cavite's victory over STI College, 68-60, and the 82-75 win of University of Makati over Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Pasay, 82-75.

Jerome Cenita scattered 19 points to lead the Baycats of coach Edgar Macaraya to their sixth straight win.

Glenn Bolocon and John Villaver added 14 and 10 points, respectively.

LETRAN'S Mark Anthony Balneg draws a foul from Perpetual Help's Khiel Misa during their recent NCAA game. ERIK ARAZAS

Prolific Santos stars for Whites

ABY SANTOS TURNED in the first double-double performance in the 2006 PBA Rookie Camp to lead the White Team to a 61-51 victory over the Yellow Team yesterday at the PhilSports Arena.

The 6-foot-4 Santos, a top forward from the University of the Philippines, scattered 20 points and grabbed 10 rebounds for the White Team, who missed the services of amateur stars Arwind Santos, LA Tenorio and Joseph Yeo.

Arwind Santos, the prospective No. 1 pick, Tenorio and Yeo were part of the Philippine Team that saw action in an invitational tourney in Qatar.

The trio, who arrived late yesterday, are expected to suit up for the White Team when it collides with the Blues at 3 p.m. today.

"He's got the height and the built," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao of Aby Santos.

The scores:

WHITE 61—Santos 20, Bautista 14, Sta. Maria 10, Aban 9, Uy 4, Omping 4.

YELLOW 51—Islip 10, Membrere 9, Kalaw 8, Lanete 8, De Castro 6, Perseveranda 6, Ibanes 0, Reyes 0.

Quarters: 16-10, 27-21, 46-30, 61-51

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Negros Oriental lady booters down Cebuanas

By Cedelf P. Tupas
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—A LATE GOAL FROM substitute Kat Ramas-Uypitching lifted host Negros Oriental F.A. to a 2-1 victory over Cebu yesterday and the early lead in Group C in the PFF-National Women's Open Championships here.

Playing a brilliant 1-2 passing play, midfielder Nicole Arevalo picked out a rushing Uypitching, who controlled the ball with two deft touches, before blasting a 22-yard right-footed strike that took a favorable bounce from the right post and into the back of the net prompting a wild celebration at the soggy Silliman University pitch.

It was the Dumaguete City-based squad's second win in as many Group C matches for six points, after its 18-0 crushing of Sultan Kudarat late Monday. Cebu, with three points, was relegated to third behind NORFA and Iligan.

After losing to Cebu, 1-2, Iligan came through with the most convincing win of the tourney so far—a 21-0 triumph over Iligan.

A draw against Iligan at 2:30 p.m. today will see the NORFA lady booters through to the semifinal phase, while Cebu needs to come out with an even more explosive performance against Sultan Kudarat in its final group match.

GAMES TODAY
(Foundation U Field)
8 a.m.—Negros Occidental vs Iloilo
2:30 p.m.—Sultan Kudarat vs Cebu
(Silliman University field)
8 a.m.—NCR vs Cagayan-Misamis Oriental
10 a.m.—Davao vs Oriental Mindoro
2:30 p.m.—Iligan vs Negros Oriental

In Group A action at the Foundation University pitch, striker Farrabeth Limbo produced a hat-trick to power Oriental Mindoro to a come-from-behind 7-2 win over Zamboanga.

Sheeryn Ambrosio pounced on a goal-mouth scramble for the go-ahead goal in the 44th minute and Limbo scored two of her three goals in the second half to eliminate Zamboanga, which suffered an 8-0 defeat at the hands of Davao.

Oriental Mindoro plays defending champion Davao, an 8-0 winner over Zamboanga, at 10 a.m. today for a semifinal spot in this tournament held in cooperation with the Provincial Government of Oriental Negros, Dumaguete City, FU and SU.

A PHALANX OF Negros Oriental defenders smothers a Cebu offensive during the game at the Foundation University field yesterday. RENE GENOVE

Ucaa opener features St. Francis-EAC tiff

AN EARLY CLASH BETWEEN POWERhouse teams St. Francis of Assisi College and Emilio Aguinaldo College ushers in the fifth season of the Universities and Colleges Athletic Association (Ucaa) this Saturday at the San Andres gym in Malate.

The two-time defending champion Generals take on the Doves in the opener's featured game, shortly after the match featuring host Acsat against PSBA.

The Doves reigned during the first two seasons of the league (2002-03) until the General toppled them in 2004.

A colorful opening ceremony will be held at 10 a.m. with newly elected Ucaa president Raoul Sia leading the way.

"I'll continue the vision of the Ucaa founders, which is to provide pure amateur sports that give significance to grassroots development," said Sia, who appeared in the weekly PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila accompanied by Tisha Abundo of PSBA yesterday.

Sia, also vice president of Acsat which has been in operation for over 30 years with branches all over the country, said several innovations will be made this year, foremost of which is the holding of the home and away format.

"That (home and away) is our main innovation this season in our attempt to make the league more prestigious and for students and schools to patronize us even more," said Sia in the public sports program sponsored by Pagcor, Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and Masco chair Ali Atienza.

Sia is taking over the Ucaa reins from Teddy Talens of Olivarez College.

Completing the six-team cast is La Salle-Dasmariñas.

Aside from basketball and volleyball (men and women), the league will be holding a first ever cheer dancing competition this season.

Rains wash out Samsung golf opener

HEAVY RAINS YESTERDAY MORNING forced the cancellation of the first round of the Samsung Amateur Tour at the Splendido Taal Golf Club course in Batangas.

Boy Blue Ocampo, chief of the organizing Professional Sports Management Group Inc., ordered the cancellation after rains drenched sections of the course.

"The skies cleared up early in the afternoon but it was already too late for us to resume play," said Ocampo.

With the cancellation, the championship division has been reduced to 54 holes and all three handicap brackets of the ladies division as well as the men's Class C and Class D into 18 holes.

Weather-permititng, the Class A and Class B for men will be played tomorrow and Friday.

Debbie struggles in US Am elims

THE PHILIPPINES' DEBBIE DE Villa birdied the par-5 18th hole to salvage a six-over-par 77, a stroke outside the cutoff line for the 36-hole qualifying phase of the 2006 US Women's Amateur at the Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club's Witch Hollow Course in North Plains, Oregon Monday (Tuesday in Manila).

De Villa held her own against the best in the 156-player field with a one-over card after 11 holes of the 6,380-yard course until she opted to play aggressively and lapsed into a maze of bogeys.

"I need to play smarter tomorrow because I made mistakes which I shouldn't have," said the petite De Villa, referring to her 8-iron tee-shot on the par-3 No. 12 that found the water and a poor 5-iron punch shot from the thick rough that went just 10 yards for a pair of double bogeys.

DE VILLA: She needs a round better than Monday's 77.

Counting her bogeys on Nos. 13 and 17, De Villa's closing birdie from 6 feet checked her skid and put her back in the hunt for one of the berths in the last 64. She had 37-40.

That was eight shots off the troika of Americans Margaret Shirley and Paige Mackenzie and Korean Mi Jung-hur, who turned in identical 69s to pace the field after the first round of the 36-hole elims. Play shifts to match play for the 64 qualifiers. Thirteen players share the 63rd position with 76s.

"I'll give it all tomorrow (today) and I promise to play smarter," said the Filipina shotmaker, barely five-feet tall but whose grit and spunk impressed many of her co-players.

"She's just a stroke outside the top 64, so she really needs a good round to make it to the matchplays," said national team coach Bong Lopez.

That appeared well within reach in the early going when De Villa, the reigning RP Ladies Open champion whose stint here is sponsored by ICTSI, shrugged off a double-bogey start with a birdie on No. 6 and a slew of pars after 11 holes.

Peter Lee: Ovation to a landmark

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

OF COURSE, IT SOUNDED LIKE A BIG joke when it was first reported that the great man had been stripped of his signature moustache.

Over his dead body, friends of Mr. Peter Lee swore upon hearing the news.

Well, sorry to report this, but Lee, senior tennis champion, premier restaurateur, man for all seasons, is dead.

They've also shaved off, very clean, his stiletto moustache, trademark of a classy, relevant lifestyle that had lent glamour to practically everything he had touched.

Those who worked on Sir Peter's body at the Paz Funeral on Araneta Avenue, where he lies in state, must be told they had committed a blasphemy.

Why? Peter Lee wore his moustache like a badge, or a gold medal, the way a returning wounded soldier would display this over his proud breast pocket.

* * *

Imagine Papa Hemingway and Santa Claus minus their famous snow beards.

Or the young Charlie Chaplin without that tiny brush of hair over his naughty upper lip.

Yes, just like these legends, Peter Lee was an original.

His was not the simple rags-to-riches story of a former waiter and kitchen boy (at the old Ma Mon Luk in Quiapo) who rose to run his chain of restaurants.

In the first place, Mr. Lee was not the sort who would easily lay claim to affluence.

If he was ever rich, it was in friends, whom he had never failed to shower with his genuine brand of concern and kindness.

Said the celebrated, multi-awarded painter Danny Dalena, a Peter Lee fan: "The guy was one of a kind, a first-class act. He had that gift of making everybody feel very special. You see him with his tiny glass of whisky, then he would suddenly disappear, next you knew he was emerging from the kitchen, coming to you smiling, with a tray of a dish he had personally prepared."

* * *

Peter Lee's Hong Kong Teahouse at the corner of UN Avenue and Mabini Street in Ermita, Manila, is plainly a three-star restaurant.

But by simply doing things his way—Mr. Lee was a hands-on manager who would get up before the sun to choose the crabs, *lapu-lapu* and assorted goodies at the seaside market off Baclaran—he had the eating place surpass five-star standards.

Amazed first-timers would always walk away with a blissful burp—and vow to be back again.

The main fare? There is an exquisite list but, after his first visit, Mayor Willy Robles of Baras did not tarry long and came back for the *sepo* special (assorted seafood with sea cucumber), sweetish steamed *lapu-lapu* in soy sauce, and hot seafood *pancit canton* of the unforgettable kind.

* * *

Above all, a restaurant must be neat and well-lighted, Sir Peter loved to preach.

In the same manner, he would say, that a good life doesn't necessarily have to be very long, but one that is lived in the right way and style.

Mr. Lee, a former tennis ball boy who went on to win a few seniors championships at the Philippine Columbian, firmly believed that, just like with other good things, one good dish deserves a second serving.

This obviously was behind his penchant to retell old jokes in his inimitable way.

Have you heard of this man who had a dog? he would start to recycle a story he had told a couple of weeks before.

Of course, you've heard it but, before you could shake your head, he would proceed to give the trite tale a funnier and more believable twist.

With his gift at story-telling, Mr. Lee could've made many biblical tales, including the banishment from Eden, sound less fictitious.

* * *

But that was not what he had been here for all these useful years.

Peter Lee was a great salesman. He worked for an Australian firm while sending his kids to college.

But more than anything, he peddled sincerity and genuine friendship.

"Muhammad Ali even gifted him with a pair of boxing pants after he had him fitted with a suit in my grandpa's old tailoring shop on M.H. del Pilar," said Jeanette, Lee's eldest daughter.

This was in 1975, when Ali fought Joe Frazier at the Araneta Coliseum. This reporter saw a big autographed photo of Ali inside that shop with the dedication, "To the greatest tailor in the world."

* * *

Peter Lee, with his roguish smile, his signature moustache and his ever-present slack suspenders, was a star in his own right.

He was definitely an institution. But, in the hearts of countless friends, he has blossomed into a landmark.

He was 78 going on 35 and his great performance here, needless to say, deserves an encore.

You bet that act of stripping Peter Lee of his signature moustache was equal to desecrating a monument.

So, in order to make amends, they've drawn, with the use of an eyebrow pencil, a likeness of the original moustache over Lee's silent mouth.

Nothing could be odder. Why? Just like with Peter Lee, there are rare things that cannot be readily recycled.

Peter Lee didn't want you grieving. With that bogus moustache under the glass, our friend must again be pulling our legs, even as they've already brought the curtains down.

RP 5 showing irks old-timer

IN HUDDLE

Beth Celis

THE PATRIARCH OF a basketball family said he experienced some kind of *déjà vu* following the Philippine team's dismal finishes in the Jones Cup and the recently concluded Al-Emadi International Basketball Championship in Doha, Qatar, where it ended dead last.

"Just like old times," the patriarch said sarcastically. "Despite the upgraded lineup and coaching, we're still at the bottom of the heap. And these competitions are not even as prestigious as the Fiba Asia Championship or the Asian Games. How can we expect to qualify for the Olympics?"

With such results, the patriarch said, the essence of preparation is obviously lost.

"Isn't this why we formed a training pool in the first place? To be able to prepare for international competitions? It seems we're back to square one, despite the massive cost involved in maintaining the RP team," the old-timer said.

* * *

Barangay Ginebra fans are excited over the projected return of Rudy Hatfield to the PBA. In particular, the fans are thrilled over the prospect of Rudy and Eric Menk, former Tanduay teammates, reuniting in the Ginebra camp.

Acting on the fans' request, I touched base with Ginebra team manager Allan Caidic to find out if Rudy is really coming back. I know that Menk had gone out of his way to look for him in the United States and to convince him to return. Rudy and Eric both come from Michigan.

Allan said Eric is back and has started to work out with the Kings. However, there's no word on Rudy yet.

He may or may not return. Allan promised to let us know as soon as he finds out.

* * *

Got a text message from Kris Aquino in Las Vegas while she and husband James Yap were watching the US-Puerto Rico tune-up match.

"James is in heaven. We're watching US team. Dwayne Wade and Lebron James are playing. Pat Riley is in our row, about 10 seats away. We are in the fourth row behind the goal. Scottie Pippen and Dr. J also in the audience," Kris texted.

"The tickets are expensive, $275 apiece at scalpers' rate, but worth it *na*. Chance of a lifetime for James. It's an experience he can treasure for the rest of his life. He didn't want to spend so much but I told him it's worth it because he may never again have this opportunity. Poor Puerto Rico. Score after 4th quarter: 114-69."

According to Kris, James almost caught Wade's autographed shoe which he tossed to the audience after the game.

"The shoe passed through James' hand but the guy behind us was able to grab it," Kris related.

* * *

Godspeed to Eugene and Danny Tejada who leave for home in San Francisco on Friday.

Danny said Eugene will start rehab therapy at the Sta. Clara Center in Sanfo as soon as they get there.

It will take six months or longer, but as soon as he gets in shape, Eugene plans to return to Manila. He likes it here. He actually prefers to stay here, except that he has to undergo therapy at the Sta. Clara which is one of the best rehab centers in the United States.

Danny promised to keep us updated on Eugene's condition.

* * *

Unlike many of their colleagues, Rey Lazaro and Alvin Teng are two fine examples of PBA cagers who made good after their retirement in the PBA.

Rey Lazaro, who prides himself in being the only cager to quit the league with a live one-year contract, is now based in Miami, Florida, where he works in an accounting firm.

Rey, who came to visit some weeks ago, is in the forex cargo business. He was playing for Tanduay when he decided to try his luck in the US in 1990.

Alvin, on the other hand, owns and operates a big 10-door hardware and construction store in Blumentritt, with wife Susan.

He said the business is doing well, and some of his clients come from the basketball circles as well as media.

* * *

The television edition of "In Huddle" is aired during the 5 p.m. newcast of RPN-9.

RACING TIPS BY TOP CHOICE

Race 1—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Formidable Jaeda (6), blue Iris (3), Empire Lady (8), Royal Rose (4), Lumiere (7)
Race 2—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Magley (5), Verdadera (1), T-Mac (10), Amgonnatellmydade (3), Key Quest (6)
Race 3—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—West N Wild (6), Amaretta (8), Parrot Moe (4), Aya's Dream (7), He's A Balong (3)
Race 4—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Loveko'To (9), Ferrarione (2), Regal Times (3), Be My Pride (6), Battle Hero (12)
Race 5—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Modern Classic (7), Western Dancer (10), Rebound (11), Hurry Prince (6), Unang Apo (8)
Race 6—(Penta/Qrt/Tri)—Vantage (5), Sambat (4), Sunline (10), Yukozuna/Black Pearl (1); Sharp Cookie (8)
Race 7—(Top Of D'Line (5), Dona Nene (9), Friendly Venture (1), Classic Royale (4), Hazit Coming (8)
Race 8—(Super 6/Qrt/Tri)—Don Ramon (10), El Love Senora (3), Head Turner (2), Kambro (13), Drink N Drink (9), Si Isidro Ko (11)

Enter the Dragons

Welcoat undergoes a 'paint-staking' makeover

WELCOAT (above) is desperately seeking Ginebra's Romel Adducul. From the top frame on right, Jojo Tangkay, Jun Jun Cabatu and Jay-R Reyes. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

By June Navarro

IT MAY BE THE PRO LEAGUE'S NEWEST kid on the block, but in time it will breathe fire, the team's co-owners say.

Welcoat, the Philippine Basketball Association's latest addition, will be known as the Dragons when the ballclub makes its debut in the pro league's 2006-07 season in October.

And officials of Asian Coatings Philippines, the team's holding company which acquired the franchise rights of Pilipinas Shell, is said to be only too happy about the monicker.

A league insider said the PBA assigned the Dragons tag to lend Welcoat an intrepid identity and so that the ballclub can make a "strong marketing impact" with an excellent product recall.

Although Welcoat is still holding tryouts, co-owners Raymond Yu and Terry Que have elevated three players—Junjun Cabatu, Jay-R Reyes and Ernie Sagad—from the ball club's PBL squad.

Yu and Que said they would also hire Jercules Tangkay, Welcoat's top gunner in the Philippine Basketball League, and hope that Letran's Aaron Aban, 6-foot-8 Mark Andaya and playmaker Boyet Bautista fall on their lap during the annual rookie draft on Aug. 20.

Welcoat, which will have Leo Austria as head coach and Caloy Garcia as assistant tactician, is expected to complete its maiden roster through free-agency and the draft.

Based on the initial tryouts Monday, Que said the Dragons are interested in signing up Froilan Baguion, Nino Gelig, Gilbert Lao and Adonis Sta. Maria, and "are also considering" the acrobatic Joey Mente, Rob Wainwright and Denver Lopez.

"Most likely, this will be the composition of the team," said Que.

"As a new team, we're not really expecting to defeat the league giants," said Yu. "A respectable finish will be enough."

The Dragons will also try its luck in the PBA dispersal draft on Aug. 10 where Welcoat can pick players left "unprotected" by the nine other teams. Each team is required to name 10 players on its protected list.

Adducul is missing link

Que and Yu said Barangay Ginebra's Rommel Adducul remains as the biggest missing link in the Welcoat lineup.

The 6-foot-5 Adducul helped Welcoat capture a championship in the PBL and is now being dangled as trade bait by Ginebra.

"He's an exact fit in the Welcoat lineup," said Que of the Ginebra slotman, whose right sheen had to be operated on before the playoffs of the recent Philippine Cup.

Adducul's agent, Ed Ponceja, said his ward's condition has improved and that doctors have allowed the player to use the treadmill.

Lawyer Mamerto Z. Mondragon, ACP's corporate secretary, will be the Dragons' PBA governor.

PBA approves trades after revisions

AIR21 AND COCA-COLA YESTERDAY rectified their controversial three-way trade with Barangay Ginebra after it was junked by the Philippine Basketball Association over the weekend.

PBA commissioner Noli Eala approved the revisions after the three teams adhered to league rules on player trading.

In the end, the Tigers kept Manny Ramos, Kalani Ferreria, two second-round picks (2006) from Ginebra and San Miguel Beer, apart from the 2007 and 2008 first-rounders of the Express.

Air21 acquired the 2008 and 2009 first-round picks of the Tigers plus Ervin Sotto and Aris Dimaunahan in the exchange.

"I have now approved the trade among these teams after the revised proposal they submitted conformed to the rules of the PBA," said Eala.

The irregularity in the trade sprang when Air21 retrieved its 2007 and 2008 first-round picks from Coca-Cola after dealing Ramos and Ferreria to the Tigers.

Based on the findings of the Commissioner's Office, the Express initiated the trade by shipping Ryan Bernardo along with two first-round picks to the Tigers.

The Tigers exchanged Billy Mamaril, Rafi Reavis and the rights to Rudy Hatfield, whom the Express immediately sent to the Barangay Ginebra Kings, who swapped Aris Dimaunahan, Ervin Sotto, Ferreria and Ramos in return.

Eala said the lapse came when the Express traded Ferreria and Ramos to the Tigers and retrieved their two future first-round picks. *June Navarro*

BAP chooses to keep mum over RP five debacles

RATHER THAN TOUCH ON THE FLOUNDERing campaigns of the Pilipinas Basketball-backed national team abroad, rival group Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP) is keeping mum for some reason.

BAP president Joey Lina yesterday declined comment on the debacles of the national team that saw action in both the William Trent Jones Cup in Taiwan and the recent Al-Emadi International Basketball Championship in Doha, Qatar.

Lina said only that the BAP—which has been locked in a row with the Philippine Olympic Committee over its suspension from the local Olympic body—will be sending an official to the Fiba (international basketball federation) World Congress in Japan this month.

"We will be there because we are a regular member," he said.

Fiba continues to recognize the BAP as the country's sport association. However, Fiba has suspended the Philippines from competing in Fiba-sanctioned tournaments due to a dispute between the BAP and Pilipinas Basketball.

Still, Pilipinas Basketball has been fielding a national team composed of PBA cagers and amateur standouts in invitational tourneys.

Recently, a national team carrying the colors of San Miguel Corp. finished dead-last in Doha after dropping all its five games.

The Philippines also had a fruitless campaign in Taipei, Taiwan, losing four of its five outings in the Jones Cup last month. *Jasmine W. Payo*

SPORTSWATCH

Boom Boom vs Brazil champ

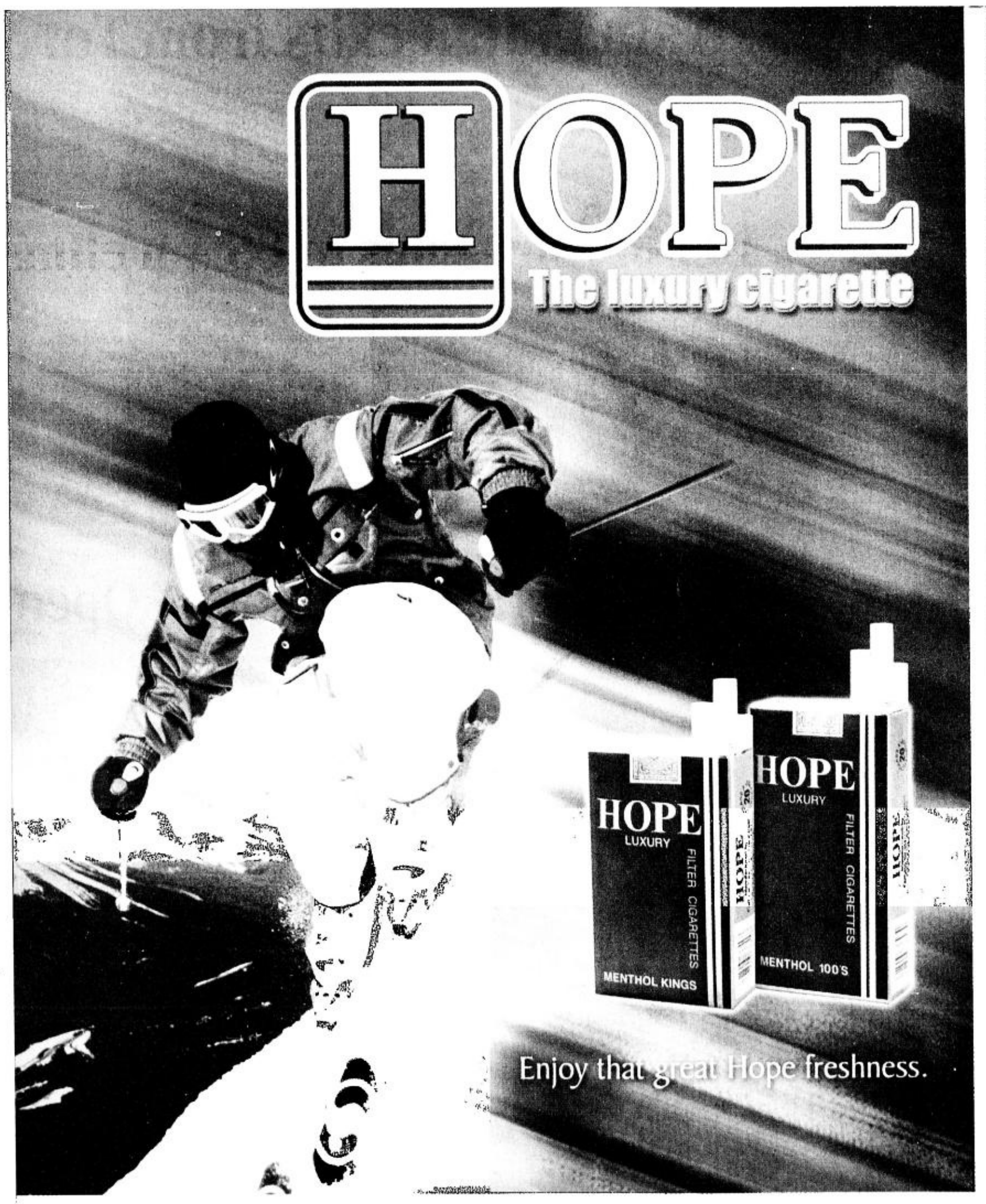
REY "BOOM BOOM" BAUTISTA WILL FIGHT BRAZILian super bantamweight champion Giovanni Andrade in the undercard of the Sept. 18 rematch between Marco Antonio Barrera and Rocky Juarez at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas. Golden Boy Promotions matchmaker Sampson Lewkowicz chose Andrade to replace Chile's Moises Gutierrez, who was scratched due to visa problems. Andrade totes a 51-9 win-loss record. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

PCAP Stagfighter search on

THE SEARCH FOR THE FIRST PINOY COCKERS ASsociation of the Philippines (PCAP) Stagfighter of the Year blasts off at the Makati Coliseum on Sept. 4 via a special 5-stag derby sponsored by B-Meg Derby Ace. Eight derbies will be held to determine the winner, who stands to receive P1 million, said promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co. Other schedules will be on Sept. 11 and 16; Oct. 2, 9, 16, 21 and 28. The PCAP Cocker of the Year race saw Richard Bates, boxing champ Manny Pacquiao and Jake Macasaet emerging as the top three winners.

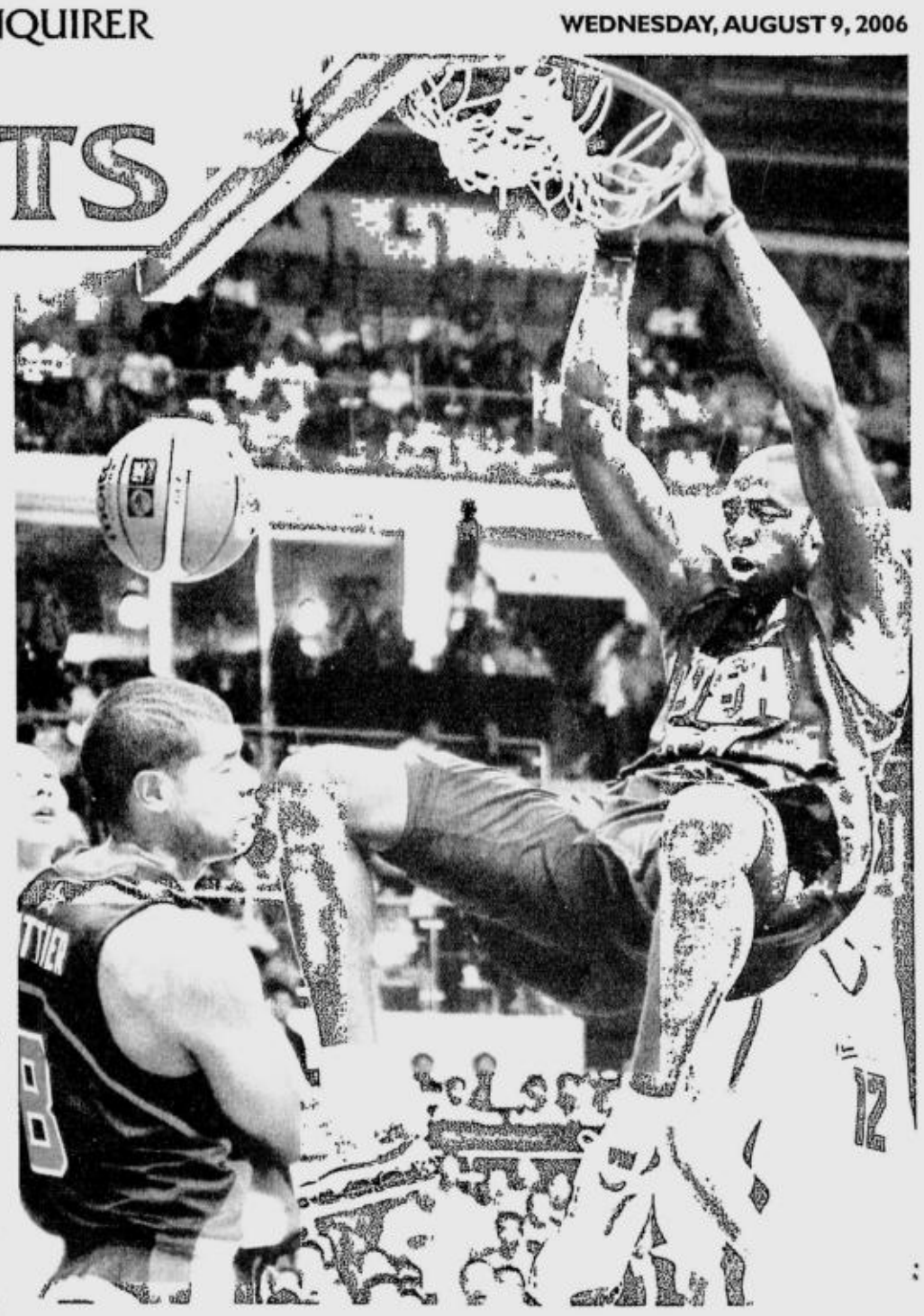
'Rambulan' lures entries

WITH AN ATTRACTIVE FORMAT LAUNCHED BY THE San Juan Coliseum management, the P2.5-million "Rambulan" 5-stag derby slated on Aug. 21, 23, 25, 28 and 30 looms as another blockbuster with no less than 250 entries expected. Sponsor is Sagupaan Complexor 3000. For an entry fee of P8,800, participants who score two points in the eliminations will share in the P200,000 day prize. "It means that those with two points are already assured of P16,000 or more," said promoter Ronnie Lacsina. Cockers and breeders may bring their stags to the SJC. For inquiries, call 0918-9001411, 725-5369 or 725-6563.



SPORTS

US five tramples Yao-less Chinese



DWIGHT Howard of the US hangs onto the ring after a slam dunk as China's Jie Libin (left) and Shane Battier look on in Guangzhou, in southern China's Guangdong province. AFP

GUANGZHOU, CHINA—CHINA'S young basketball players were licking their wounds and anxiously awaiting the return of NBA All Star Yao Ming Tuesday after a devastating 119-73 loss to the United States.

Yao has been out of action with a broken foot since April and although he finally began practicing with the national side last week, he was unable to play in Monday's match.

"Yao is one of the best players in the world, for sure, Yao, this guy can make every team better, not only the China national team, but every team in the NBA," China's Lithuanian coach Jonas Kazlauskas said. "For sure the leadership, the confidence for the team, there is many things he can do for us."

Kazlauskas said he is encouraged with Yao's recuperation, but injuries have plagued China's preparations for the 24-team World Basketball Championships this month in Japan.

So far, they posted a three win, 11 loss record in tune-up games, all without the giant Houston Rocket center.

To make matters worse, China's second best player, four-year NBA veteran Wang Zhizhi, injured his knee in a match against France last month and has been unable to practice since.

INJURY puts Yao Ming on the bench.

Wang, Yao and former San Antonio Spur center Menk Bateer, were once known as the "Walking Great Wall" of seven-foot (2.12 meter) Chinese centers, but Bateer is also nursing an injury and Wang has not played with the national side since leaving for the NBA nearly five years ago.

Kazlauskas expects Wang to begin practicing this week ahead of the Stankovic Cup in Nanjing city beginning Friday that will include teams from France, Germany, Greece, Australia and Brazil.

Despite the sound drubbing by Team USA, American players had nothing but praise for how the young Chinese team played without their top guns.

"For them to be as competitive as they were tonight without Yao or Wang Zhizhi, it says a lot," Washington Wizard and Team USA center Antawn Jamison said. "Just imagine if you have those two guys on the same team with the guys that were out there tonight, they can definitely cause some upsets and make a difference."

Meanwhile, 19-year-old, 2.14 meter center Yi Jianlian, widely touted as the next Chinese star to play in the NBA, will have to man the middle as Yao and Wang fully recuperate. On Monday, Yi had 14 points and nine rebounds.

"I like Yi's game. Yi is very impressive," Cleveland Cavalier LeBron James, high scorer in the Monday match with 22 points, said.

"He has a chance to be in the NBA some day if he keeps working hard on his game. I think Yi was the most impressive guy." *AFP*

Nietes eyes IBF crown vs Rachman

DONNIE "AHAS" NIETES OF THE PHILIPpines challenges International Boxing Federation straw-weight champ Muhammad Rachman of Indonesia on Oct. 28 in Palangkaraya City in Borneo Island, Indonesia.

The pride of Murcia, Bacolod City has a record of 17 wins, 1 loss, 3 draws with 9 KOs while Rachman holds a 51-7-4, 23 KOs record.

In a long-distance interview, promoter Ndondo "Aseng Jr." Sugiarto revealed that Nietes has already been approved as Rachman's next opponent, although the fight contract has yet to be signed by the Filipino.

Earlier, sportsman Antonio L. Aldeguer, who manages Nietes, accepted the offer to pit his fighter against Rachman. "I'm very happy with this development," said Aldeguer. "I hope they send the contract as soon as possible."

According to Fightnews' Jeffrey Pamungkas, Rachman had received an offer of $55,000 for a unification fight in Puerto Rico against WBO champ Ivan Calderon.

"For a unification bout in Puerto Rico against Calderon the money offered is not good enough," Rachman was quoted as saying. "I won't refuse to fight in Calderon's home if the payment is good enough for me. Therefore, for the time being I prefer the fight against Nietes in Indonesia."

Rachman won the IBF title via a split decision verdict over Daniel Reyes in 2004. *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

Mayol fights Sept. 18

WORLD BOXING COUNCIL NO. 2 STRAW-WEIGHT Rodel Mayol will return to ring action on Sept. 18 at the Pacifico in Yokohama, Japan, against a soon-to-be-announced opponent. This will be Mayol's first ring appearance since dropping a heart-breaking yet close unanimous decision to WBC 105-lb kingpin Eagle Kyowa last May 6 in Tokyo. This was confirmed yesterday by Mayol himself in an interview with this writer, adding that he will fly to Japan on Friday to start his rigid preparation for the fight. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

Nalbandian exits from Toronto netfest

JAMES Blake: Top American hope REUTERS

TORONTO—AILING ARGENTINIan third seed David Nalbandian crashed out of the first round of the $2.45-million ATP Masters Series here Monday, routed by Italian Davide Sanguinetti.

Sanguinetti beat Nalbandian 6-1, 6-2 and will next face either lucky loser Nicolas Mahut of France or Czech qualifier Jan Hernych.

"I had a headache, maybe a little bit of fever," said Nalbandian, who bowed out in less than an hour. "Didn't feel really good to try to push myself to play good.

"From last night, maybe I start feeling—I was sweating. I had a headache last night as well," he said. "Woke up, had the same thing. But I say I want to try, nothing to lose. I'm not going to feel worse than this. I tried, but nothing changed."

Nalbandian was joined on the sidelines by 10th-seeded Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis.

Baghdatis, runner-up to Roger Federer at the Australian Open and playing for the first time since reaching the semi-finals at Wimbledon, was surprised by France's Julien Benneteau, 5-7, 6-2, 6-3.

This week's tournament at the Rexall Centre sees the return to action for the first time since the Wimbledon final of Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Two years ago, Federer won the title here with a victory over American Andy Roddick in the final.

Last year—with Federer absent—Nadal got the better of Andre Agassi in Montreal to win his first hardcourt title.

Paul Henri-Mathieu of France is first in the firing line for the top-seeded Federer, the Wimbledon champion who is 28-1 on hard courts this season.

Other potential opponents for the Swiss superstar include 16th-seeded Tommy Haas of Germany, who won in Los Angeles two weeks ago, sixth-seeded Nikolay Davydenko of Russia, who recently won in Sopot, Poland, and former world No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt of Australia, seeded 11th.

The second-seeded Nadal begins his defense against Olympic champion Nicolas Massu of Chile and could go on to face 13th-seeded Czech Tomas Berdych—who won their last encounter in Cincinnati.

Berdych advanced with a 6-4, 7-5 victory over Canadian wildcard Daniel Nestor.

With both Roddick and Agassi absent this year, James Blake is the top American.

The fifth-seeded Blake, looking to bounce back from last week's loss to Marat Safin in Washington, coasted to a 6-4, 6-1 victory over 17-year-old Canadian wildcard Philip Bester.

In other matches Monday, fourth-seeded Croatian Ivan Ljubicic defeated Nicolas Almagro of Spain 7-5, 6-1.

Chilean 15th seed Fernando Gonzalez beat Sweden's Robin Soderling 6-3, 4-6, 6-2. *AFP*

Frazier crashes out of LA Open

CARSON, CALIFORNIA—FORMER champion Amy Frazier made an early exit at the Los Angeles Open on Monday, losing 6-2 6-4 to fellow American Jill Craybas in the opening round.

Frazier, making her 16th appearance in the tournament she won in 1994, was blown away in the first set but fought back in the second to 4-5 after trailing 1-3.

Both players struggled to hold serve in breezy conditions at the Home Depot Center and the match ended when Frazier double-faulted then netted a forehand after a long rally.

It was their third career meeting, with Frazier having won the previous encounter 6-4 6-1 at Charleston in 2001. Craybas won the first match at Amelia Island 6-2 6-2 the same year.

In other first-round matches, American Ashley Harkleroad beat Chinese qualifier Meng Yuan 6-4 7-6, German Julia Schruff edged Bulgarian Tatiana Poutchek 5-7 6-3 6-3 and Argentine Mariana Diaz-Oliva beat US qualifier Lilia Osterloh, 7-6 7-6.

Russian Maria Sharapova, who won the Acura Classic in San Diego on Sunday, is the top seed and gets a bye into the second round where she will meet compatriot Anastassia Rodionova. *Reuters*

AMY Frazier yields title. AP

Superkarting tilt resumes with 6th leg

RIVALRIES AND HIGH SPEED ACTION REturn as the 2006 Shell Superkarting Series resumes with its sixth leg on Aug. 12-13 at the Boomland Kart Track in Pasay City.

It will be another great showdown between Matteo Guidicelli of Alessandra Racing and Marlon Stockinger of Birel-SFIC in the combined Formula 125 and Rotax Max Seniors class as they try to beef up their bids for the Karter of the Year award.

STOCKINGER

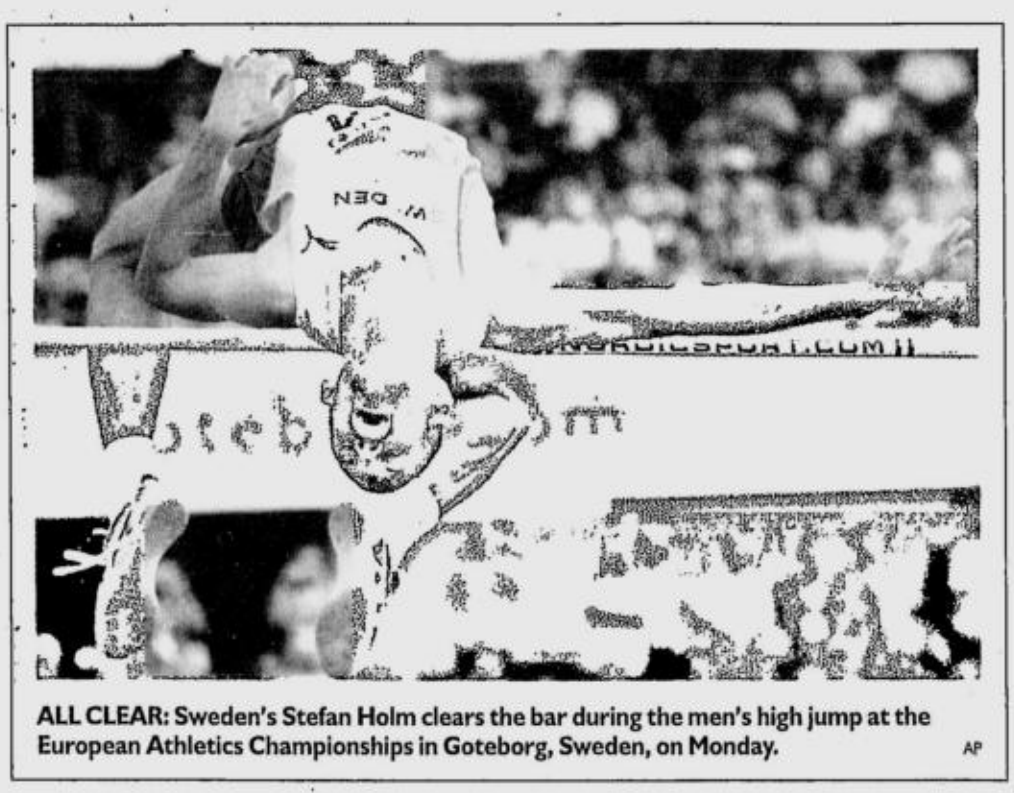
Guidicelli, despite ending only fourth in the Boomland leg, still leads the series with 263 points and another win will boost his chances of regaining the crown he captured two years back.

But Stockinger now moved just seven points behind with 256 points after clinching his third straight victory. A fourth triumph will fortify his bid for his first Karter of the Year award in the event sponsored by Shell Helix, San Mig Coffee, Denso Iridium Power, Honda Phils., Eastway Company, Aeromed Ambulance Transport and Yokohama Kart Tires.

Behind them are Birel drivers Daniel Cleak and Indy Villalon who amassed 190 and 158 points, respectively. Jean Stefano Marcelo is at fifth with 132.

Also in the pack are Alessandra Madrigal and Maico Angeles of Alessandra Racing, Paolo Eslao of Ready to Race, Mark Bumgarner of M&M Racing, Marty Aguilar of Bosch Intelco and Cebu Racing Group's lawyer Jess Garcia and Jan Jan Gonzales.

Garcia is also way ahead in the ROK Senior class with 285 points.



ALL CLEAR: Sweden's Stefan Holm clears the bar during the men's high jump at the European Athletics Championships in Goteborg, Sweden, on Monday. AP

Valle Verde, MTC gain Prince tennis final 4

FOURTH-RANKED VALLE VERDE Country Club beat Mandaluyong Lawn Tennis Club, 6-1, while third ranked Mandaluyong Tennis Club bested Capitol Tennis Club, 5-2, to complete the semifinal cast of the second Prince Home and Away Invitational Team Tennis tournament at the Valle Verde Country Club in Pasig City Saturday.

Valle Verde banked on Kiko Guttierez and Tony Sagansay Sr. (55 and above), Eva Abella and Sally Ong (ladies), Junjun Villanueva and Derrick Santos (35 and above), and Rey Orsolino and Rey Felix (45 and above) to avenge its loss to MLTC in the elimination round.

Mandaluyong Tennis Club, on the other hand, relied on the performances of Morris Melendres and Bhay Escalera (55 and above), Ace Alcos and Gabby Remegio (open), Baby Gregorio and Toto Ramirez (45 and above), Cris Mariano and Vernon Salas (35 and above) and Allan Badillo and Tres Banez (35 and above) to repeat over Capitol.

The semifinal round of the event supported by Yellow Cab Pizza will be held on Aug. 12 with No. 1 La Consolacion hosting Valle Verde in their indoor shell courts in Parañaque. Second-ranked Philippine Columbian Association will host Mandaluyong.

La Consolacion and PCA are hoping to duplicate their wins in the elimination round over Valle Verde and Mandaluyong, respectively.

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BUSINESS

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PLDT disappoints with profit drop

2nd quarter income down 8% at P6.73B

By Riza T. Olchondra

TELECOM GIANT PHILIPPINE LONG DISTANCE Telephone Co yesterday said its second-quarter net profit fell 8 percent to P6.73 billion from P7.3 billion a year ago due to currency losses and charges.

Analysts had expected PLDT to match or even beat rival Globe Telecom, which nearly doubled its second quarter net profit to P2.3 billion from a year earlier as promotions on its mobile phone products boosted sales.

PLDT's first-half core profit, which removes the effects of foreign exchange fluctuations and depreciation, rose 11 percent to P15.2 billion from a year earlier, in line with market estimates of P15-P15.5 billion.

Core profit rose 6.2 percent in the second quarter compared with the same period last year.

"It's in line with expectations but it just looks bad in relation to how well Globe did and also the earlier indications coming from management," said Edgar Bancod, research head at ATR Kim Eng Securities.

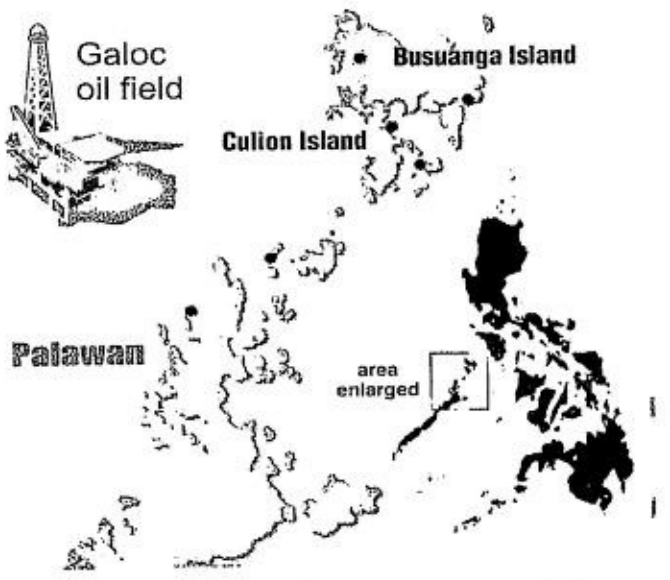
PLDT chair Manuel Pangilinan had been quoted last month as saying the company's second-quarter net profit would be higher than the year-ago figure.

Analysts forecast PLDT's net profit at P33.44 billion this year, slightly lower than P34.1 billion in 2005, according to Reuters Estimates.

Pangilinan said the company, partly owned by Hong Kong's First Pacific Co. Ltd. and Japan's NTT group, would keep its full-year core profit goal of P32 billion, up 11.5 percent from 2005.

Sales growth in the telecoms market has been slowing after six years of rapid expansion, with firms focusing on cost-cutting and targeted marketing to prop up profits and attract new customers.

PLDT/ B2



Work on Palawan oil field starts in mid-'07

By Abigail L. Ho

NIDO PETROLEUM LTD. WILL now start developing the Galoc oil field in the Northwest Palawan basin after securing contracts for the use of a drilling rig and subsea trees.

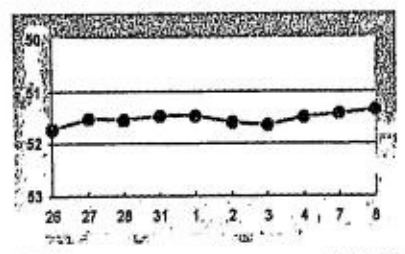
In a disclosure to the Australian Stock Exchange, on which Nido is listed, the company said it would be using the Jet Drilling-managed Energy Searcher drillship to start drilling three wells—two firm and one option well—on the site by June 2007.

"The Energy Searcher will be the first offshore rig in Palawan in six years and heralds a revival in

WORK/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱51.365 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 8, 2001

¥115.09 = $1

As of 5 p.m., Aug. 8, 2006

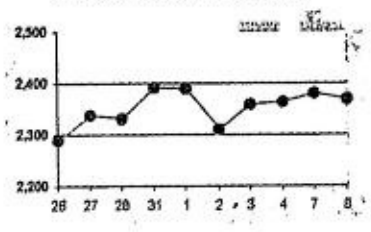
GOLD: $645.80-646.30

per ounce Hong Kong, Aug. 4, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Shares close lower

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



SHARE PRICES closed 0.46-percent lower yesterday after PLDT reported a weaker first-half net profit, dealers said.

They said investors were also sidelined, awaiting signals from US monetary authorities, who will decide later in the day whether or not to end a two-year cycle of interest rate increases.

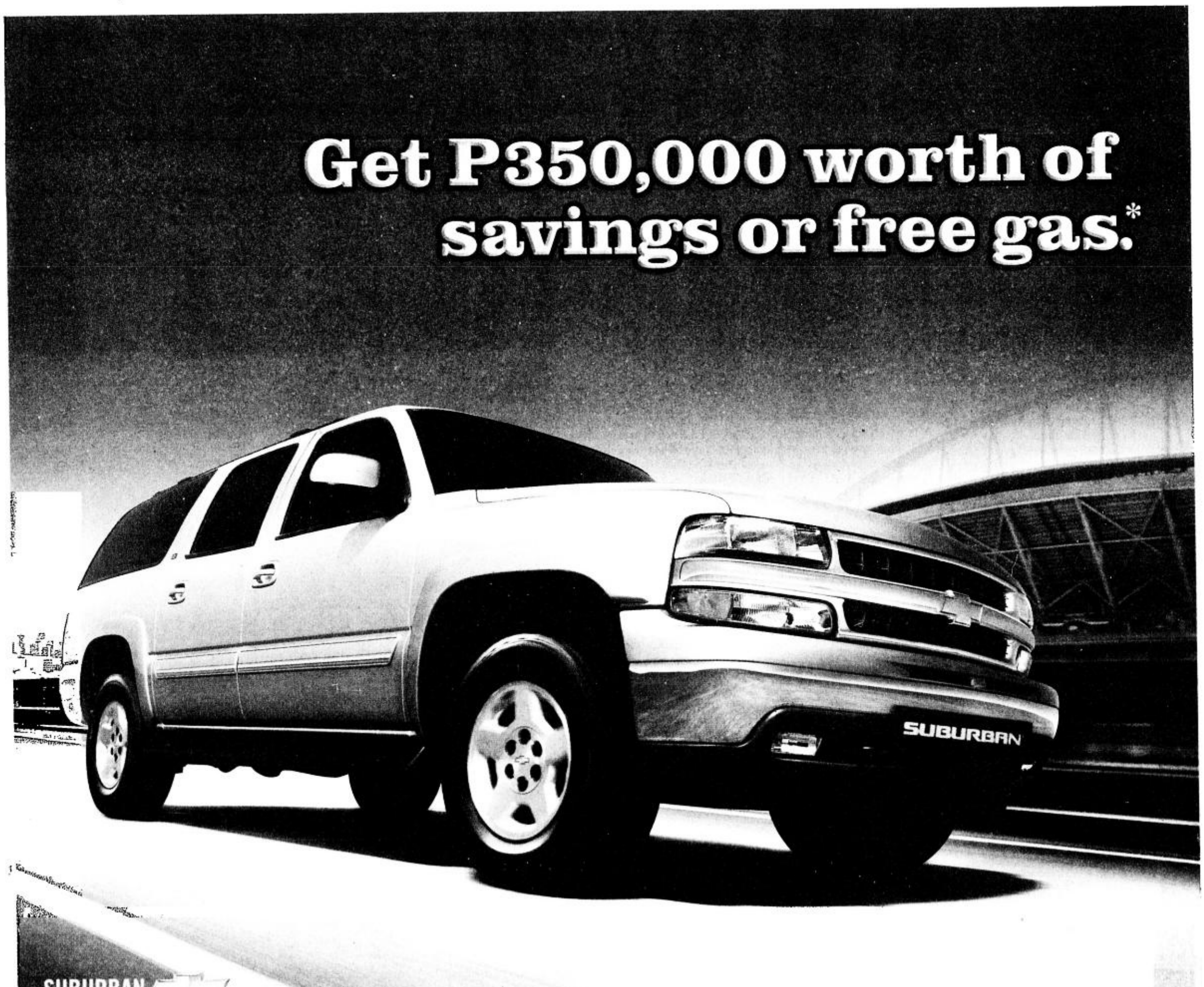
(See stock market report on Page B2)

The composite index ended down 10.88 points at the day's low of 2,367.75. It touched a high of 2,382.19. The broader all-shares index retreated 3.49 points to 1,453.44.

Losers outnumbered gainers 57 to 45, and 43 stocks closed flat with 2.67 billion shares traded valued at P1.07 billion.

"The first-half (PLDT) net profit is still in line with our full-year fore-

SHARES/ B2



PSBank reports 63% jump in first-half net profit to ₱533M

Trading gains offset shrinking interest margins

By Doris C. Dumlao

PHILIPPINE SAVINGS BANK, THE thrift bank unit of the Metrobank group, posted a 63-percent jump in net profit in the first half to P533 million from a year ago as trading gains compensated for shrinking interest margins.

The publicly listed thrift bank, the second biggest in the sector, yesterday announced that total revenues surged 27 percent to P3.4 billion from P2.7 billion a year ago.

"These were posted despite lower interest rates, which compressed margins but presented trading opportunities in its investment portfolio," PSBank chief finance officer Perfecto Ramon Dimayuga disclosed to the Philippine Stock Exchange.

Its total assets improved 8 percent, spurred primarily by the 13-percent expansion in loans, which totaled P30 billion at end-June. On the other hand, deposits rose to P47 billion.

As a result of a successful rights offering in April, PSBank's total capital increased by 19 percent to P5.7 billion.

With its tier-2 issuance and rights offer, PSBank's capital adequacy ratio increased to 19.4 percent during the period.

"This is one of the highest in the thrift banking industry and prepares the bank for the implementation of the Basel 2 accord next year," Dimayuga said.

Its return on equity jumped to 20.1 percent from 13.1 percent posted in the same period last year.

Its first-half performance has allowed PSBank to declare an 18.5-percent special cash dividend, which was paid in July 2006. This was on top of the 1.5-percent regular cash dividend it pays its shareholders every quarter.

"PSBank's loan portfolio growth is combined with risk management discipline, allowing it to temper the rise of bad debts," Dimayuga said.

Its non-performing loans for the period declined to 4.94 percent from 5.58 percent year-on-year while provisioning coverage for non-performing loans was at its highest at 87 percent against only 59 percent a year ago.

"PSBank remains committed to utilizing customer service and technology in enhancing the banking experience of all its clients. It has equipped its front liners with operating systems that provide real-time customer information and customer handling capability," Dimayuga said.

PSBank has 150 branches nationwide and plans to open 13 more within the year. It has a total of 147 automated teller machines as of end-June.

BPI pushes mini-branch strategy

BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS YESTERDAY launched a pioneering mini-branch banking format to make further inroads into the mass market, particularly the younger bracket.

The first of a new batch of mini branches called BPI Express, focusing on the faster-moving products and services, was inaugurated in BF Parañaque.

In a recent interview, BPI president Aurelio Montinola III said the bank would make use of some of the branches absorbed from Prudential Bank and convert them into BPI Express branches.

The footprint of the mini-branch is smaller than the regular branch, ranging only from 25 to 100 square meters.

"The people today are younger, more mobile and more technology savvy. If you enter the branch, there are two tellers there who will take care of transactions the normal way," Montinola said.

"If you want to discuss things in detail, get financial advice, there are two people at the end, who will advice on things like whether UITFs (unit investment trust funds) are suitable for you," he said.

Montinola said 87 of 187 branches it absorbed following a merger with Prudential Bank were now converted into regular BPI branches.

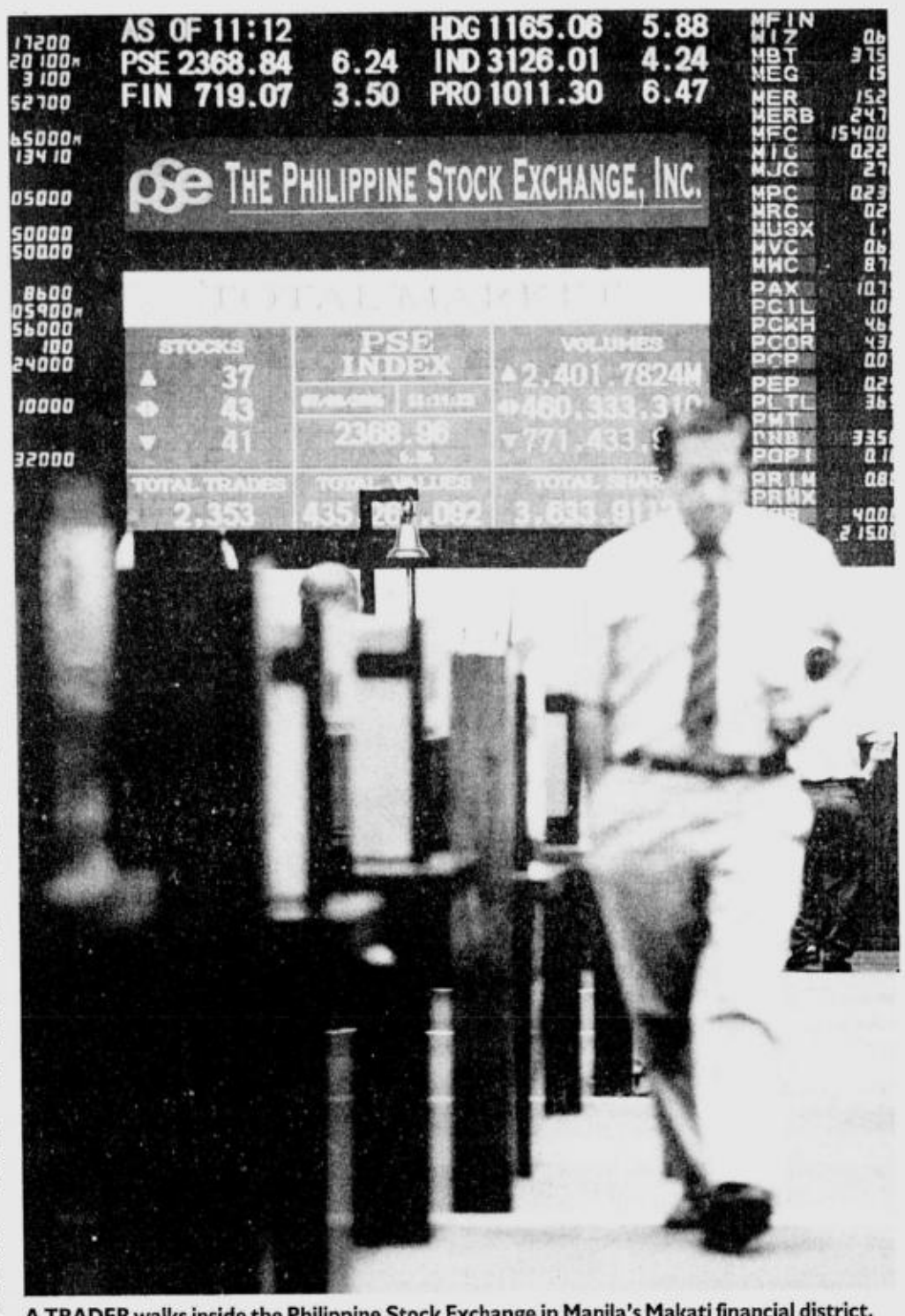
"But a hundred of them, of which 50 plus are in Manila, are the ones we're converting into BPI Express," he said.

He said the bank would roll out about 20 of these mini-branches by the end of the year.

"This is an experiment but we're hoping that customers will like it. If the product catches on we will bring it up to a 100 in one year," he said.

BPI usually spends P2 million to spruce up each regular branch, but Montinola said the downsizing was not primarily to cut on expenses.

"It's a different format. It's a new item on the menu. The look is different and we're starting with the smaller ones, especially now that we have to worry about things like energy savings," he said. *Doris C. Dumlao*



A TRADER walks inside the Philippine Stock Exchange in Manila's Makati financial district. Philippine's corporates are taking advantage of relative political calm and a healthier economic backdrop to rap investors for funds but the outlook for initial public offerings (IPOs) remains muted. REUTERS

Work on . . .

From page B1

the Philippine oil industry. Execution of these contracts is a major milestone for the Galoc Project. These are the first significant contracts to be placed following the approval of the plan of development by the Philippine Department of Energy," Nido Philippines president Bryce Martin said.

"Galoc will be the first offshore field to be developed since the nearby Malampaya gas development in 1998 and, at 17,500 (barrels of oil a day), will represent approximately 7.5 percent of national oil imports and a doubling of the country's current oil production," he added.

According to Nido, the first phase of the Galoc development involved two subsea horizontal wells connected via a seabed flowline and riser system to a floating production, storage and offloading (FPSO) facility.

The company expressed confidence that it could drill highly productive horizontal wells, each initially capable of producing up to 15,000 barrels of oil per day.

For 12-24 months, Nido said it would control the production rate of the wells to an initial plateau of 17,500 barrels a day. This would be done to maximize oil recovery.

Nido expects to draw first oil by the fourth quarter of next year.

"The development of the Galoc oil field is the biggest single investment in Nido's history. We are extremely fortunate to secure this rig and subsea trees in such a tight market for oilfield services," Nido deputy managing director Joanne Williams said.

PLDT disappoints . . .

From page B1

The PLDT group's service revenues edged up 2 percent to P60.6 billion in the first half from a year earlier and 1.3 percent to P30.7 billion in the second quarter.

Globe's service revenues climbed 6.4 percent in the first half to P28.45 billion from a year earlier and 7.5 percent to P14.3 billion in the second quarter.

PLDT declared a P50-a-share dividend for stockholders, representing a 60-percent dividend payout ratio based on core earnings a share, up from 40 percent in 2005.

Globe Telecoms raised its dividend payout to 75 percent of net income from 50 percent starting in the second half.

PLDT, Asia's eighth-largest mobile phone operator by subscribers, corners about 58 percent of the local mobile phone market while Globe has 37 percent and Sun Cellular of JG Summit Holdings Inc. holds 5 percent.

Mobile penetration rate in the Philippines was estimated at around 43 percent at the end of the first quarter, higher than Indonesia's roughly 20 percent but lower than about 50 percent in Thailand.

PLDT's consolidated wireless service revenues rose 6 percent to P38.6 billion in the first half from P36.5 billion last year.

The group's total cellular subscriber base grew by more than 2 million subscribers to 22.5 million in the first six months. Smart recorded net additions of about 980,000 subscribers while Talk 'N Text added about a million subscribers to end the first half of 2006 with 16.4 million and 6.1 million subscribers, respectively. *With Reuters*

Citigroup sees strong Asian growth

AMERICAN FINANCIAL GIANT Citigroup expects the contribution of its Asia-Pacific operations to global income to increase substantially in the coming years from 14 percent as of the second quarter of 2006.

The Asia-Pacific operations contributed $2.7 billion to the group's global income in 2005.

The Asia-Pacific business has been growing at a compounded annual growth rate of 20 percent in revenues and 25 percent in net income between 2002 and 2005.

Much will be expected of the Asia-Pacific franchise, which has to carry a lot of the load for Citigroup to meet its target of growing its international business at twice the growth rate of the US business, said Ashok Vaswani, chief executive officer of Citigroup Global Consumer Group-Asia Pacific.

"For the second quarter of this year, the US contributed 57 percent to Citigroup's global income and international markets like Mexico, Japan, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America, 43 percent. We are confident the contribution to the bank's global income from international markets will match that of the US' moving forward. Asia Pacific contributed 14 percent to the bank's global income."

Vaswani heads Citigroup's consumer business in Asia, and for the first six months of this year, Citigroup chalked up $700 million in net income on revenue of $2.4 billion for its Asia Pacific consumer business. The consumer group accounted for 49 percent of the income in the second quarter of this year.

Citigroup's Asia Pacific consumer franchise spreads across 12 countries and includes 404 retail bank branches and 547 consumer finance branches as of June.

Retail banking comprises the biggest component of Citigroup's Asia-Pacific consumer franchise and a key target market for Citigroup here is the mass affluent segment.

Citibank, through its CitiGold Wealth Management Banking service, is the leading provider of wealth management solutions to Asia's expanding mass affluent segment (estimated at around three million households). According to Vaswani, it was a natural choice for Citigroup to target top-end customers, given the group's global network.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of August 8, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31	31.5	31	31	146,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53	54	53	53.5	593,900
China Banking Corp.	700	705	700	705	1,040
Citystate Savings Bank	20	20	20	20	1,500
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.39	1,040,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	82	82	81	81	26,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	37.5	38	37.5	37.5	1,215,200
Philippine National Bank	34.5	34.5	34.5	34.5	25,000
Phil. Savings Bank	40	42	40	42	63,700
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	17.25	17.25	16.75	16.75	36,500
Security Bank Corp.	49	49	48.5	48.5	107,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	45	45	45	45	27,700
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Bankard Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	50,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.82	1.82	150,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	30.5	30	30.5	16,400
Manulife Financial Corp.	1540	1555	1540	1555	2,360
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	530,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	215	215	215	215	500
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1925	1925	1925	1925	930
Ivantage Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.32	1,625,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	41.5	42	41.5	42	260,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	43.5	43	43	140,400
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.5	15.5	15.5	25,500
Manila Electric Co. B	25	25.5	24.75	24.75	338,800
Manila Water Co. Inc.	8.8	9	8.8	9	9,402,000
Petron Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.25	4.25	1,164,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.27	550,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	1,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.94	0.94	0.93	0.93	330,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23	23	23	23	370,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	32.5	33	32.5	33	190,700
Pancake House Inc.	4.6	4.6	4.6	4.6	200,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.85	3.8	3.85	2,157,000
San Miguel Corp. A	64.5	65	64.5	65	71,300
San Miguel Corp. B	72.5	74	72.5	73	105,200
Universal Robina Corp.	19	19	18.75	19	1,017,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,100,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	1,480,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.62	1.62	1.6	1.6	1,200,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	1.4	1.46	1.4	1.44	84,000
CHEMICALS					
Corro-Coat Inc.	1.5	2.12	1.5	2.12	80,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.66	0.66	0.66	0.66	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.34	0.41	0.34	0.41	187,450,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	3,500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	45,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	15,000,000
Ayala Corp.	430	430	425	427.5	110,180
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	170,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.1	5	5	160,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	10,400,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.82	1.84	1.82	1.84	230,000
APC Group Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.21	0.21	1,420,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0095	0.0085	0.009	646,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.92	0.92	0.92	0.92	150,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	2.75	3	2.75	2.95	183,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.93	1	0.92	1	140,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	8.3	8.3	8	8	5,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1,735,000
DMCI Holdings Inc	4.4	4.45	4.4	4.4	880,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	10,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	2.65	2.65	2.65	2.65	10,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.26	1.26	1.24	1.24	105,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.2	6	6.1	233,000
Keppel Holdings	1	1	1	1	300,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	100,000
Prime Orion Phils Inc.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	450,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.86	0.86	0.86	0.86	40,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	20,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.12	0.115	0.12	11,630,000
SM Investments Corp.	216	219	216	219	66,700
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.0775	0.09	0.0775	0.0875	46,700,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.125	0.125	5,800,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	13.75	14	13.5	13.5	14,830,800
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	30,000
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	3,859,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.31	0.34	0.31	0.33	22,780,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.14	2.16	2.14	2.14	575,000
C & P Homes Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	40,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	3,280,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.46	0.46	5,860,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.04	0.043	0.04	0.042	35,100,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.36	1.42	1.36	1.4	3,884,000
Gotesco Land Inc.	0.085	0.105	0.085	0.09	1,000,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.1	0.105	0.095	0.105	3,100,000
Interport Res.	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	21,000,000
Keppel Phils. Prop. Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	10,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	350,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.5	1.54	40,921,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.24	0.24	0.235	0.24	6,940,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	10,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.21	0.22	0.19	0.21	11,990,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	11.5	12.25	11.5	12.25	922,900
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.44	0.45	0.43	0.43	4,140,000
SM Development Corp.	1.66	1.66	1.66	1.66	140,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.2	8.2	7.9	7.9	4,091,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.25	17.25	17	17	22,300
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	1.04	1.1	1.04	1.1	169,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.34	1.36	3,430,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1030	1040	1030	1040	27,330
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.65	3.65	975,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2100	2105	2070	2080	73,020
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	550,000
Imperial Res.	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	9,000,000
Ionics Inc.	2.2	2.32	2.16	2.18	1,490,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	22,900,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	576,000
Philweb Corp.	0.03	0.031	0.029	0.031	517,500,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	2.85	2.95	2.85	2.95	143,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.75	14.75	14.5	14.5	788,200
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	676,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	587,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.25	700,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.54	0.54	670,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.5	8.5	8.5	8.5	8,000
Far Eastern University	1150	1150	1150	1150	1,550
iPeople Inc.	3	3	3	3	27,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.16	2.16	2.1	2.1	376,000
Paxys Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	407,700
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	4.1	4.1	3.8	3.8	3,268,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	4.15	4.15	3.9	3.9	841,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.008	0.0085	0.008	0.0085	176,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.7	321,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.27	3,420,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	5,530,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.025	0.025	0.024	0.024	266,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	20,700,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.01	0.0095	0.0095	147,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	4.35	4.35	4.25	4.3	1,244,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.45	2,757,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26	26.5	25.5	26.5	97,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.52	2,310,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.58	0.59	0.57	0.57	620,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	3,880,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	118,600,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	166,600,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.36	2,719,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.36	1.36	1.32	1.36	1,692,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	130,300

CURRENCIES

August 8, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.778877	1.000000	51.3830
Japan	Yen	0.006768	0.008690	0.4465
United Kingdom	Pound	1.485240	1.906900	97.9822
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.100172	0.128611	6.6084
Switzerland	Franc	0.635403	0.815794	41.9179
Canada	Dollar	0.695736	0.893256	45.8982
Singapore	Dollar	0.495154	0.635728	32.6656
Australia	Dollar	0.594381	0.763126	39.2117
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.066096	2.652661	136.3017
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.207684	0.266645	13.7010
Brunei	Dollar	0.493585	0.633714	32.5621
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000110	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020639	0.026498	1.3615
UAE	Dirham	0.212066	0.272272	13.9902
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.283900	65.9706
Argentina	Peso	0.253706	0.325733	16.7371
Brazil	Real	0.357611	0.459137	23.5918
Denmark	Kroner	0.134070	0.172132	8.8447
India	Rupee	0.016732	0.021482	1.1038
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212808	0.273224	14.0391
Mexico	New Peso	0.071621	0.091954	4.7249
New Zealand	Dollar	0.485402	0.623208	32.0223
South Africa	Rand	0.115082	0.147754	7.5920
Korea	Won	0.000809	0.001039	0.0534
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023718	0.030451	1.5647

Shares close lower

From page B1

cast of P32.9 billion," said Nestor Aguila of DA Market Securities.

"I don't think the weak second-quarter results should be a big issue given the strong growth in PLDT's mobile subscriber base."

Elsewhere in the market, analysts said investors were tentative until the US Fed meeting is out of the way.

"Everyone is waiting for the Fed," said Jonathan Ravelas of Banco de Oro.

"Investors are speculating that the Fed may take a pause, but recent US economic data seem to be on the contrary, so there is an uncertain mode right now and investors prefer to stay out of the market for the meantime," he added.

Dealers also said the local market was also due for a correction after rising steadily in the past three sessions. *AFP*

Cosmo: We're still No. 1

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

GOOD THING THAT ERNIE LOPEZ OF ABS-CBN Publishing was not anywhere near Lisa Gokongwei Monday.

Otherwise, there could have been a hair-pulling incident, judging from the uncharacteristic tantrum the magazine empress threw after reading "K" magazine's claim that it is now outselling her Cosmopolitan.

And, judging from the tone of her e-mail yesterday, the normally level-headed Gokongwei was still steaming from the claim.

"We are not comparing apples with apples here," Gokongwei said, noting that K, the Kris Aquino magazine published by ABS-CBN, has transformed itself into a quarterly, instead of a one-time issue as had been originally planned, while Cosmo remains a monthly.

"K stays in the racks three times longer than Cosmo. In that particular period, we would have released three issues versus their one," she said.

Gokongwei disclosed that no less than SGV in May 2005 audited the Cosmo print run at 68,647 copies.

Another audit, this time by Punongbayan & Araullo, was conducted September 2005, which placed the number of Cosmo copies actually printed at 75,565.

Another Cosmo audit is scheduled next month, amid K's claim that its first issue had sold more than 50,000.

"The next time other publishers make a claim, I would ask them to please back it up with numbers FROM A REPUTABLE THIRD PARTY, as the Philippine Daily Inquirer does itself," Gokongwei wrote.

Her Summit Media now publishes 22 glossies, including FHM and Top Gear. Now on its ninth year, the local edition of the Cosmopolitan still corners the biggest chunk of the advertising pie "across all titles in and out of Summit Media," Gokongwei said.

HI and good-bye

AFTER Yvonne Yuchengco, the House of Investments has another director, Teodoro Peña, abruptly tendering his resignation from the Yuchengco holding company.

Peña, who was elected to the HI board only last month, resigned as independent director last Monday without giving any reason in his three-sentence letter.

A Cabinet-level minister of natural resources during the Marcos years, Peña still sits though as independent director in Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and Engineering Equipment Inc., as well as other Yuchengco companies.

Yvonne Yuchengco has been replaced by businessman Enrique Lagdameo and, according to the grapevine, Peña by former DBP chair Antonino Alindogan Jr.

PNB as victim

IT LOOKS like Philippine National Bank of Lucio Tan has been left holding the proverbial bag insofar as the $4.4-million claim being pursued by lawyer Vicente Chuidian from the Philippine government is concerned.

According to court records, the $4.4-million letter of credit that PNB issued to a Chuidian company was part of the assets and liabilities that the then state-owned PNB transferred in 1987 to the national government as part of the bank's rehabilitation plan.

But Trade and Investment Development Corp., through then National Treasurer Eduardo Sergio Edeza, issued the deed of assignment of the L/C to the government and quit-claim to PNB only in February 2003, but only after paying 100-percent value of the instrument to two Filipino-American claimants.

More on this on Friday.

Money-go-round

- INSTEAD of the LTA building in Legaspi Village which has become too hot, Mike Arroyo is now using the Enzo building on Buendia for his office, which he coshares with his cousin and golf buddy, Benito "Bomboy" Araneta.
- Asian Spirit has joined Cebu Pacific in petitioning the Civil Aeronautics Board for a hefty fuel surcharge for both domestic and foreign airfares.

Heard through the grapevine

THERE are at least three suspects/groups behind the hoax—Macario Te letter to the Supreme Court, all ironically also from the Manila Golf Club like Te himself.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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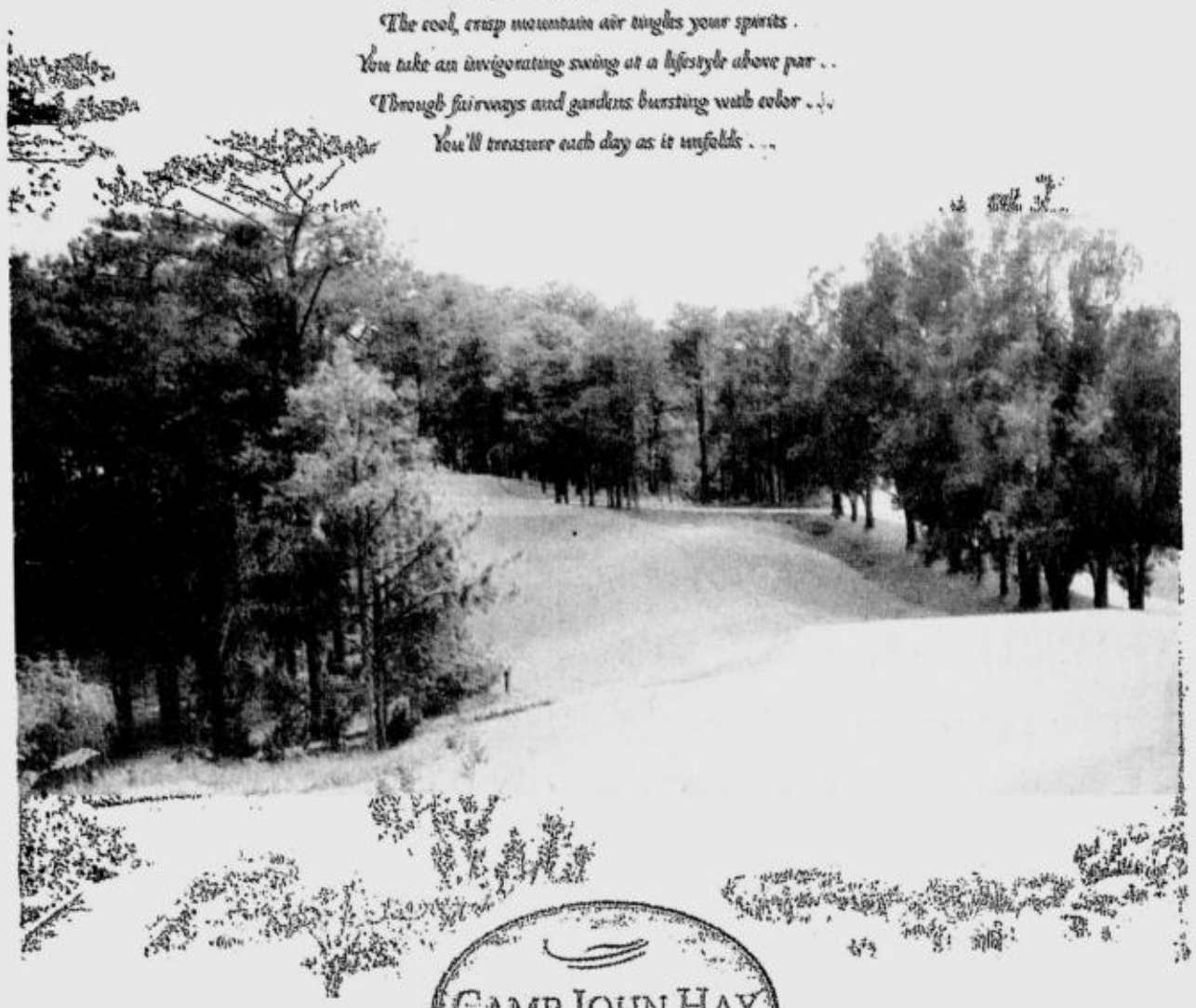

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3 YEAR WARRANTY 100K KM

Get slice of lucrative higher education market, government urged

By Irene R. Sino Cruz
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE COUNTRY has to embark on an aggressive marketing campaign to get a sizeable share of the multi-billion higher education market.

This according to Dr. Ma. Andrea Santiago, assistant professor of the De La Salle University-Manila, who said the country would earn more revenues if it tapped the growing market.

Santiago said during a recent regional forum on services here that the global trade in higher education services has reached $30 billion, with the United States getting $12.3 billion.

There are about two million people going outside their country for education, she said, but only over 4,000 foreign students came to the Philippines in 2001.

The United States gets the bulk of foreign students, of which about half come from Asia.

For those who prefer to stay within the region, Singapore, Hong Kong and India are the top destinations of foreign students, closely followed by Malaysia and China.

She said the Philippines could get a piece of the action by positioning itself as a cost-effective alternative with its lower tuition, cost of living and travel costs.

The country's other strengths are its English proficiency and tourist attractions.

Potential markets include China, Taiwan, South Korea and Thailand, she said.

China accounts for 28 percent of students taking higher education in other countries, followed by Korea (16 percent), India (13 percent), Japan (6 percent) and, Malaysia and Indonesia (4 percent).

Foreign students consider several factors in deciding where to study. The top draws are quality of education, safe environment, affordable tuition, degree recognition and employment prospects.

On the issue of quality of education, Santiago noted that only 16 percent of baccalaureate programs offered by state universities and colleges were accredited and only 9 percent of private institutions'.

Santiago said the country has to work on compulsory accreditation and shut down low-standard schools to elevate the quality of higher education.

There was also a need to change the mindset of the higher education institutions, since most were reluctant to tap the growing foreign student market, she said.

The other constraints include restrictions on foreign investment in education and a poor economic and political environment.

Caraga urged to focus on agriculture

By Chris V. Panganiban
Inquirer Mindanao

SAN FRANCISCO, AGUSAN DEL SUR—Caraga should put more focus on agriculture if it wants to get rid of its tag as the poorest region in the country, business leaders said.

Val Velasco, secretary general of the Eastern Mindanao Business Council (EMBC), said business groups have observed that local government officials have made little effort in the last 10 years to increase agricultural productivity in the province to cover for the collapse in the mining and logging industries.

The downtrend in these industries started in 1995 when the Department of Environment and Natural Resources tightened its monitoring of logging activities, which eventually led to a total log ban.

Caraga's economy, which depended largely on logging, deteriorated and the region replaced Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) as the poorest in the country.

"We really have to go back to basics, that is, go back to farming," Velasco said in a recent briefing.

Lolita Dorado, provincial director of the Department of Trade and Industry, said encouraging farmers to develop their entrepreneurial skills should be pursued.

"We really need this culture to develop since farmer-fathers do not inculcate in the minds of their children that there is a bright future if they become agri-business entrepreneurs," Dorado said.

COFFEE FOR A CAUSE. At least 60 families in Benguet benefit from the coffee plantation of Cordillera Coffee Company, one of the homegrown coffee firms set up to harness the province's valuable arabica. EV ESPIRITU / INQUIRER LUZON

Chinese firms plan ventures in fish sector

JDV meets Shandong group

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—SPEAKER JOSE de Venecia Jr. said investors from Shandong province in China have decided to put their money in fishery-related projects in the country.

De Venecia, who hosted 15 Chinese investors here recently, said Shandong officials planned to invest in fish farming, deep sea operations, boat building, feed mills, a fish processing plant and cold storage facilities.

He said fish cages would be established in Pangasinan, Samar, Leyte, Panay Island, Palawan and Davao.

"I also asked them to invest in developing and modernizing the production capacity of the 250,000 hectares of fishponds in Pangasinan by [culturing] white shrimps (Penaues vannamei) and tiger prawns with bangus," he said.

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources research center here has completed experiments on the culture of white shrimps and has started to commercialize the species.

He said he had invited the Chinese fishery officials and investors to come to the country when he visited China earlier this year.

During that visit, De Venecia said he had asked Chinese officials to invest in one million low-cost houses. He said Chinese officials had already sent teams to start the housing projects.

"We have agreed that in big cities like Metro Manila, the [housing complex] to be built will be five-stories high, while in the provinces, the houses will have two bedrooms, a kitchen, a [living room] and a toilet," he said.

De Venecia also announced that the South Korean government would give a $2-million grant to Dagupan City for the construction of a bangus processing plant.

Petron to support ethanol production

By Carla P. Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—ENERGY SECRETARY Raphael Lotilla said early this week that Petron Corp. was willing to sign a contract with any company or group that will commit to produce ethanol from sugarcane.

Lotilla made the announcement during a forum here that discussed the national policy on biofuels.

The forum was organized by Philippine Economic Society and University of St. La Salle's Institute for Negros Development.

Petron, the country's biggest oil refining company which is 40 percent owned by the government, signed last year a memorandum of understanding with San Carlos Bioenergy Inc. last year, expressing intent to buy its entire ethanol production.

SCBI will build and operate an integrated sugar mill, cogeneration plant and distillery complex for ethanol production.

The production of ethanol, a renewable and biodegradable fuel, is seen to reduce the country's dependence on foreign fuel.

To boost ethanol production, Lotilla said a legal framework was necessary.

The Senate, however, has yet to pass the bill that would lead to the replacement within four years of 10 percent of gasoline used by motorists with biofuels.

Sen. Serge Osmeña told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that the Senate could pass its version of the biofuels bill in a month.

The approved House version of the biofuels bill authored by Bukidnon Rep. Miguel Zubiri seeks the mandatory blending of all gasoline with 10 percent bioethanol, whose production the bill seeks to jumpstart by providing tax breaks to manufacturers.

By substituting 10 percent of the country's imported oil with indigenous fuel, the country can reduce its oil import bill by P35 billion a year.

Local sugar producers have urged the Senate to pass the biofuels bill, otherwise moves to produce ethanol will be delayed.

Presidential Adviser for Western Visayas Rafael Coscolluela has also proposed the creation of a Biofuel Development Council that would coordinate efforts to tap the country's alternative energy sources.

The Council should be chaired by the Department of Energy, Coscolluela said.

The former Negros Occidental governor, who is advocating the cultivation of Jatropha curcas, or "kasla," as a fuel alternative, said he has already discussed his proposal with Lotilla and hoped that the DOE would act on his suggestion.

He added that aside from jatropha, there were other plant-based fuels that could be developed as energy sources.

"There are more than 100 fuel-producing plants in the country. "Lumbang" seed, which is being used to make fashion jewelry in Cebu has even more oil than "kasla," he said.

"This illustrates the fact that in the Philippines, we have many alternatives and we can use it to our advantage," Coscolluela added.

ARMM on ethnic tourism campaign to boost economy

By Nash B. Maulana
Inquirer Mindanao

COTABATO CITY—THE AUTONOMOUS Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) is venturing into "ethnic" tourism to improve its economy.

ARMM Tourism Secretary Makakuna Pangandaman, said the venture into ethnic tourism would also support the ongoing peace process.

Pangandaman said the five-year program includes the development of Islamic Tourism and Peace Zones into cultural and inter-faith centers.

He said one of the areas being considered for the venture was the majestic Lake Lanao, which would be developed into a cruise destination.

"Under the scheme, a steel-hulled ferry will cater as a floating restaurant to local, national and foreign tourists. At the same time, it would serve as a floating clinic to serve the locals," he said.

Pangandaman said the revenue from the vessel would take care of the ship's maintenance and the crew's wages.

The proposed three-deck vessel, measuring 48 meters from bow to stern, can accommodate 80-100 cruise tourists.

Its built-in medical clinic can serve 30-50 patients on board at a time.

Pangandaman said the ARMM Tourism medium-term program will also encourage Islamic investors to put capital in Islamic Tourism Investment and Enterprise Development Projects (ITEDP).

"ITEDP seeks to strengthen tourism by promoting Islamic culture and arts," Pangandaman said.

He said that with livelihood in place, peace and order would also improve. Poverty is one of the reasons behind the lingering Bangsamoro rebellion in Mindanao.

To see the project through, Pangandaman said regional and local officials and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front were working at improving the peace and order situation in the potential tourist areas.

Cebu to entice more investments in information technology sector

After call centers, province goes for more high-value services

CEBU CITY—CEBU PLANS TO PROmote investments in information technology services here to create more high-paying jobs.

Bonifacio D. Belen, managing director of Cebu Educational Development Foundation for Information Technology (CEDF-IT), said IT-enabled services, such as call centers, medical transcription and business process outsourcing, could develop on its own as the city has already established a favorable track record.

Cebu can thus now turn to developing its IT services sector, which commands a higher value, to maximize its potential, Belen said.

"There are about 17,000 workers (employed) in IT-enabled services in Cebu. However, there are only 3,000 workers in IT services," Belen said.

The government has been promoting investments in the IT-enabled services since it produces more jobs, he said.

But Belen said attracting investments in IT services would bring high paying jobs to Cebu, and help it attain its goal of becoming another Silicon Valley.

"We have to balance the development of the two IT sectors. To become a net exporter of IT, we should not remain a labor subcontractor," he said.

Virgilio Paralisan, workshop manager of the 2nd Cebu ICT Strategy Summit held here recently, said the industry stakeholders recognized the importance of marketing Cebu as a viable site for investments.

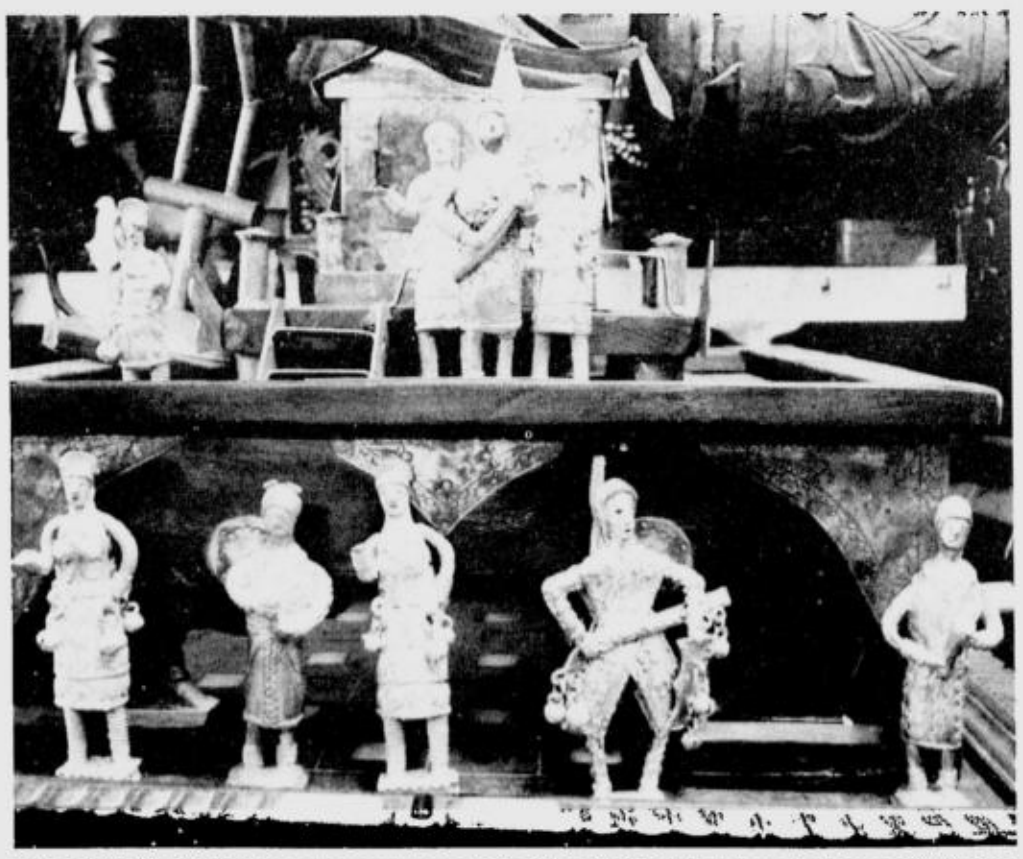
Speaking during the IT Trends series, Paralisan said Cebu would like to attract more investments in the creation of IT products and services, instead of just manufacturing.

Paralisan said participants of the 2nd ICT Summit have decided to work together to help Cebu become an IT hub.

Proposed strategies include putting more focus on information education and communication, innovation and enterprise development, brand management, research and intelligence and laws and incentives.

To enable IT industry stakeholders to participate in coming up with a road map for Cebu, CEDF-IT, in cooperation with GlobeQuest and GlobeSolutions, will organize the IT Trends quarterly forums that will tackle different concerns.

Cebu Gov. Gwen Garcia, who heads the Cebu Provincial Information and Communication Technology (CPICT), wants the development strategy implemented in three years, Paralisan said. *Irene R. Sino Cruz, Inquirer Visayas*



TOURIST FINDS. Native ornamental products are sold in novelty stores in Davao City to the delight of local visitors. DENNIS JAY SANTOS/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Crude prices fall

SINGAPORE—CRUDE OIL prices fell on Tuesday, likely a result of profit-taking a day after prices jumped more than $2 a barrel in response to the shutdown of a large oil field in Alaska.

Light sweet crude for September delivery was down 28 cents to $76.70 a barrel in midmorning Asian electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange.

September Brent at London's ICE Futures exchange fell 41 cents to $77.89 a barrel.

"It's possibly because people are taking profits after the sharp increase the day before," said Tetsu Emori, chief commodities strategist at Mitsui Bussan Futures in Tokyo.

BP Exploration Alaska Inc. began shutting down 400,000 barrels of daily oil production Sunday at Prudhoe Bay, in Alaska's North Slope region, because of severe corrosion on a pipeline.

BP officials said it could take weeks or months to restore lost production but the company would try to put portions of the network back into operation as they are repaired.

The news drove crude oil to a trading peak of $77.30 before it settled at $76.98 a barrel. It was the highest settlement price since July 14, when crude settled at a record $77.03 a barrel.

The news also caused gasoline futures to rise, and experts expect prices at the US pump to increase by about 10 cents a gallon.

Noting that US gasoline stocks are expected to fall for the third straight week in data due on Wednesday from the Energy Information Administration, Emori said crude oil prices are likely to revert toward an increase.

At around 334 million barrels, US crude inventories are at a five-year high, but OPEC's spare capacity (which can be added within a month and sustained for 3 months) is tight at around 2 million barrels a day.

BP's production shutdown adds to the list of supply worries that are currently buoying oil prices: The potential for storms in the Gulf of Mexico, violence in the Middle East and unrest in Nigeria, Africa's biggest oil producer.

On Monday, the violence between Israel and Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon neared its fifth week. While diplomatic efforts were intensifying at the United Nations, the fighting continued unabated.

Crude prices rose to a record $78.40 a barrel on July 14 on worries that Iran, OPEC's No. 2 producer, could cut supplies if it gets involved in the fighting in Lebanon and Israel. Iran is also entrenched in a standoff with the United Nations over its nuclear program, and Iranian officials haven't ruled out using oil as a bargaining chip.

Meanwhile in Nigeria—Africa's biggest oil exporter and the fifth-largest supplier of crude to the United States—militant attacks this year have shut down a quarter of the 2.6 million barrels of oil it normally produces each day.

Oil prices are 20 percent higher than a year ago, but still below all-time inflation-adjusted highs of around $90. *AP*

US sets review of trade benefits

RP among nations under evaluation

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES WILL review whether to withdraw longtime trade benefits for India, Brazil and 11 other advanced developing countries, US trade officials said on Monday.

The decision follows the recent collapse of world trade talks, which many members of Congress blame on the reluctance of large developing countries like India and Brazil to open their markets to more foreign goods.

"One of the concerns that Congress has raised is that GSP (Generalized System of Preferences) benefits go largely to a few countries, while many developing countries are not trading much under the program," US Trade Representative Susan Schwab said in a statement.

"The review I am announcing today, the first in 20 years, will help make certain that we are administering the program consistent with statutory criteria," Schwab said.

The United States imported $26.7 billion worth of goods from under the GSP program in 2005.

The 32-year-old program waives import duties on thousands of products from 133 developing countries and expires at the end of the year unless renewed by Congress.

With that deadline looming and many key lawmakers opposed to renewal, the Bush administration will review whether to "limit, suspend or withdraw" the eligibility of 13 countries that shipped more than $100 million worth of goods to the United States under the program in 2005 or accounted for more than 0.25 percent world goods exports, Schwab's office said.

The targeted countries include Argentina, Brazil, Croatia, India, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Philippines, Romania, Russia, South Africa, Thailand, Turkey and Venezuela, USTR said.

The Bush administration will also consider whether to withdraw presidential waivers that give those 13 countries and six others unlimited duty-free access for certain products.

Indian Commerce and Industry Minister Kamal Nath told Reuters in New Delhi he could not comment on the possible loss of GSP benefits until getting full details.

India is one of the biggest beneficiaries of the program.

Brazilian Trade Minister Luiz Fernando Furlan told journalists in Sao Paulo the move was at odds with a recent US-Brazilian initiative to increase bilateral trade.

A coalition of business groups, think tanks and activist organizations are expected to push for renewal of GSP. The program saved US businesses an estimated $923 million in 2005, while helping provide jobs in poor countries. *Reuters*

Bangkok at 2-mo high, other SE Asia marts down

SINGAPORE—THAI STOCKS JUMPED ON Tuesday to their highest level in more than two months, led by energy stocks PTT PCL and PTT Exploration and Production after oil prices peaked overnight, while other Southeast Asian stocks fell.

The Thai stock index rose 0.51 percent by yesterday afternoon, while Singapore's Straits Times Index fell 0.2 percent, Indonesia lost 0.2 percent and Malaysia slipped 0.08 percent.

The Philippines fell 0.46 percent, led by a 1.2 percent drop in the country's largest telecommunications firm, Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.

PLDT said on Tuesday its second quarter net profit fell 8 percent—missing market expectations—due to currency losses and charges.

In Bangkok, energy stocks led gains after oil prices surged 3 percent to $77 a barrel on Monday.

PTT Exploration and Production jumped 1.7 percent, and PTT PCL, Thailand's top energy firm, gained 0.8 percent. Together, the two stocks accounted for nearly 50 percent of the gains in the index.

In Singapore, traders said investors were avoiding taking positions ahead of the Federal Reserve's meeting on Tuesday, and the National Day holiday in Singapore on Wednesday.

"There is an overall nervousness that is weighing down on Asia," because of uncertainty over whether the Fed's cycle of interest rate rises has ended, said a regional strategist with a large foreign bank.

According to Citigroup regional strategist Markus Rosgen, markets in Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Philippines saw net outflows of funds for the week ending August 2, whereas Thailand saw a net inflow of $19.5 million.

In Singapore, Southeast Asia's largest phone company, Singapore Telecommunications fell 3.5 percent as the stock went ex-dividend, leading losses in the city-state.

Wilmar International, one of Asia's largest palm oil agribusinesses, fell 13.6 percent to 95 Singapore cents after the firm completed a compliance placement of 300 million new shares and 75 million existing shares at 80 Singapore cents each.

Wilmar, the most actively traded stock by volume at midday, had suspended trading of its shares on July 19 when the stock closed at S$1.10 following a reverse takeover of Ezy-Health Asia Pacific Ltd.

In Jakarta, shares fell ahead of a central bank meeting on Tuesday where analysts expect to it to cut its target rate by as much as 50 basis points.

Losses in Jakarta were led by Telkom Indonesia, the country's largest telecoms firm, which fell 1.9 percent.

Bank Mandiri, the country's largest lender, lost 4.5 percent. *Reuters*

Fed may pause US interest rate rises, but will stay on guard

WASHINGTON—US FEDERAL RESERVE POLicy-makers on Tuesday may break the chain of interest-rate rises they began two years ago but economists say this won't necessarily mean they are laying down arms against inflation.

The US central bank faces a multi-pronged dilemma, trying to calibrate the eventual impact of past policy actions on a slowing economy that is simultaneously under pressure from rising energy and labor costs.

Since June 2004, the Fed has hiked its trendsetting federal funds rate 17 straight times in quarter-percentage-point moves, bringing it to 5.25 percent from the drastically low 1 percent it had hit while the Fed fended off the risk of deflation.

A Reuters poll on Friday of primary bond dealers—big Wall Street firms that deal directly with the Fed—found 17 of 22 expect policymakers will keep rates steady on Tuesday.

"Yet a pause is not necessarily the end of the story," a market commentary from Morgan Stanley said on Monday. "We still believe that inflation risks are tilted higher and that the economy is more resilient than commonly thought."

During the second quarter, the rate of expansion measured by gross domestic product slowed sharply to an annual clip of 2.5 percent from a brisk 5.6 percent in the first three months of the year.

In addition, the government on Friday said only 113,000 jobs were created in July, down from 124,000 in June and well below the monthly average 176,000 in the first quarter.

Still, prices and wages keep rising.

Oil prices were at $77 barrel on Monday and prices are rising outside the energy sector as well.

The Fed's preferred inflation gauge, the core personal consumption expenditures price index, which excludes food and energy, rose 2.4 percent in the year through June, a rate well above that perceived to be the Fed's comfort zone.

This leaves the Fed in a somewhat uneasy place.

"A sustainable, noninflationary expansion is likely to involve a modest reduction in the growth of economic activity from rapid pace of the past three years," Fed Chairman Ben Bernanke told Congress last month in semi-annual testimony on the state of the economy.

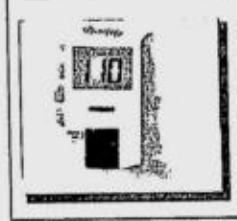
He said the Fed had to consider "possible future effects of previous policy actions—that is, of policy effects 'still in the pipeline.'"

Bernanke told a lawmaker that "at some point, a point which I did not specify, the Fed would have to get off this 25-basis-point-a-meeting escalator and adopt a more flexible approach, possibly varying its pace of tightening, possibly taking a pause." If it does pause on Tuesday, the Fed can be expected to include tough rhetoric in the post-meeting statement it issues at mid-afternoon, making clear it stands ready to resume hiking rates if they deem it necessary to attack inflation.

Some analysts believe the Fed should raise rates on Tuesday, if only to take out insurance that could be canceled should economic growth keep losing altitude.

"If the Fed raises rates, and the economic slowdown fails to recover as it has in each of the last three summers, an expedited easing campaign could be started," said economist Rich Yamarone of Argus Research Corp. in New York. "Inflation pressures are on the rise, credibility is at stake and the Fed can afford to press on." Yamarone suggested, staking out the minority view. *Reuters*

DOUBLE CHECK DIABETES



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Republic of the Philippines
Metro Roxas Water District
MRWD Bldg., Km. 1, Roxas City 5800, Philippines
Tel. # (036) 6210-737 / 6210-044 / 6215-474
Telefax # (036) 6216-083

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
No. 007-06

The **METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT (MRWD)**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project.

Name of Project : CONTRACT FOR THE SECURITY SERVICES
Location : MRWD MAIN BUILDING, SUB-STATION AND TREATMENT PLANTS
Brief Description : SECURITY GUARD TO PROTECT & SAFEGUARD THE FOLLOWING PROPERTIES:
1. MRWD Main Building, KM. 1, Roxas City (6 Guards)
2. Water Treatment Plant, Arcabalo, Roxas City (3 Guards)
3. Paslang Pumping Station, Salocon, Panitan, Capiz (3 Guards)
4. Bahit Treatment Plant, Panitan, Capiz (3 Guards)
5. Arcabalo Sub-Station (3 Guards)

Approved Budget for the Contract : Php2,108,800.00
Source of Funding : MRWD OPERATING EXPENSES
Contract Duration : One (1) year Calendar Days

The Eligibility Check / Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations A (IRR-A).

The schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Advertisement	July 31-August 14, 2006
2. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 15-28, 2006
3. Pre-Bid Conference	August 28, 2006 @ 10.00 am
4. Pre-qualification conference	September 14, 2006 @ 10:00 am
5. Deadline for Submission of Bids	September 14, 2006 @ 10:00 am
6. Opening of Bids	September 14, 2006 @ 10:00 am
7. Bid Evaluation	September 16, 2006
8. Post-qualification	September 18, 2006
9. Notice of Award	September 20, 2006

1. Must have a reserved list of Security Personnel readily available for MRWD.
2. Must be a PADPAO Member.
3. Must have a sub office in Roxas City.
4. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php1,000.00 to the METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

The **METRO ROXAS WATER DISTRICT** assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) GONZALO GLEN B. DELGADO
BAC Chairman

(PDI–August 2 & 9, 2006)

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
PRESIDENTIAL BROADCAST STAFF-RTVM
MALACAÑANG, MANILA

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Presidential Broadcast Staff-Radio Television Malacañang (PBS-RTVM), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors to apply for eligibility and to bid the hereunder equipment:

One (1) set Hanging Camera
1 unit 2/3" 3CCD Digital Video Camera
1 unit Camera adaptor CA-TX50
1 unit A20x8.6bBERM ENG type zoom lens
1 roll TRIAX cable 5 meters
1 roll TRIAX cable 25 meters
2 rolls TRIAX cable 100 meters
1 unit Camera Control unit with Camera Operational Unit and SDI Output Board
1 unit Rack Mount bracket
1 unit A20x8.6BEMD 20x Zoom lens with extender professional (Remote control (type lens) with ECU-12A. Motorized extender for A20x8.6bBEMD lens
1 unit Professional Pan/Tilt w/ FH-10
1 unit Power Supply for CPT
1 unit Multi Head Controller for CPT
1 unit Control cable 150 meters

Approved Budget for the Equipments : Php 5,500,000.00
Source of Funding : ASEAN Fund
Delivery Period : Thirty (30) days upon receipt of P.O

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Date	Time	Place
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 31, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM
2. Pre-Bidding Conference	Aug. 17, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM
3. Submission and Opening of Bids	Aug. 31, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM
4. Bid Evaluation	Sept. 01, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM
5. Post-qualification	Sept. 04, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM
6. Notice of Award	Sept. 06, 2006	10:00 am	PBS-RTVM

Bid Documents will be available at the PBS-RTVM Admin & Finance (c/o Mr. Cyrus M. Reputana) Tel Nos. 734-5681/735-6187 only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refunable amount of Php500.00 to the Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM Cashier.

The Presidential Broadcast Staff-RTVM assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) MELBA B. ALIGAEN
PBS-RTVM, BAC Chairman

(PDI–August 9, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Regional Office III
PhilHealth Bldg., Lazatin Blvd., San Agustin, City of San Fernando Pampanga
Healthline (046) 963-7148 www.philhealth.gov.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
ITB No. III-06-002

PhilHealth Regional Office III (PRO III), through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites registered and licensed security agencies to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : Procurement of Security and Other Related Services
Location : PhilHealth Bldg., Lazatin Blvd., City of San Fernando
Brief Description : Provision of security and other related services to PhilHealth Regional Office III and its 10 Service Offices in Region III
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php4,882,000.00
Contract Duration : One (1) year
Delivery Period : Within 15 days after issuance of Notice to Proceed

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bid Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post Qualification, and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	August 01 to 15, 2006
2. Pre-Bid Conference	August 15, 2006 at 1:30 PM
3. Opening of Bids	August 28, 2006 at 1:30 PM
4. Bid Evaluation	August 29 to September 05, 2006
5. Post-Qualification	September 06 to 13, 2006
6. Notice of Award	September 28, 2006

Bid documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Php 4,500.00 to the Cashier of PhilHealth Regional Office III.

(Sgd.) PRISCILLA G. ASUNCION
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - August 2 & 9, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
San Miguel Avenue, Pasig City

IN THE MATTER OF THE APPLICATION FOR THE APPROVAL OF THE SALE OF THE VARIOUS SUB-TRANSMISSION LINES/ASSETS WITHIN THE FRANCHISE AREA OF SOUTH COTABATO II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (SOCOTECO II)

ERC CASE NO. 2006-002 MC

NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION (TRANSCO),
Applicant.
x- x

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

Notice is hereby given of the filing by the National Transmission Corporation (TRANSCO) on January 10, 2006 of an application docketed as ERC Case No. 2006 002 MC, for approval of the sale of the various sub-transmission lines/assets within the franchise area of South Cotabato II Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SOCOTECO II) in accordance within Section 8 of Republic Act No. 9136 (The Electric Power Industry Reform Act of the EPIRA).

The assets for sale are covered by a Lease Purchase Agreement dated July 13, 2005 that TRANSCO negotiated with SOCOTECO II located in the following areas within the latter's franchise area.

1. Klinan Siguel 69kV line
   (a) Sch. 2 (Klinan-New Society DC)
   (b) Sch. 3 (New Society (Apopoy)-Lanoy DC)
   (c) Lanoy-GDSP SC
   (d) SCH 1 (Cargill-Siguel DC) (with 1 ABS)
2. Klinan-DolePhil SC 69 kV line
3. Klinan-Sari SC 69 kV
4. SanGlan SC 69 (with 1 ABS)
5. GSC Airport SC 69 kV tie line
6. Klinan-Maasim SC 69 kV (with 2 ABS)
7. Maasim-Klamba SC 69 kV

The terms of the Lease Agreement provide for a down payment of twenty percent (20%) of the purchase price of **Two Hundred Fifty Seven Million Five Hundred Forty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Sixty Five Pesos and Eighty Centavos (PhP 257,543,865.80)** net of adjustments and deductions or equivalent to *Fifty One Million Five Hundred Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Three Pesos and Sixteen Centavos (PhP 51,508,773.16)* payable upon approval of the Agreement by the Commission. The eighty percent (80%) balance equivalent to **Two Hundred Six Million Thirty Five Thousand Ninety Two Pesos and Sixty Four Centavos (PhP 206,035,092.64)** is payable in twenty (20) years in **Two Hundred Forty (240)** equal monthly installments, plus interest based on the Money Market Association of the Philippines (MART) bench rates, at the time of receipt of the twenty percent down payment payable on the last day of each month. The purchase price is alleged to be fair and reasonable as it represents the disposal value of the subject sub-transmission assets based on potential revenue deemed by the Commission as the Current Sound Value Concomitant with the proposed disposal, TRANSCO shall extend to SOCOTECO II a rate reduction of its sub-transmission charges under its sub-transmission cost adjustment rate/methodology, which is pending approval by the Commission.

The Commission has set the application for hearing on August 15, 2006 at nine thirty in the morning (9:30 A.M.) at the ERC Hearing Room, 15th Floor, Pacific Center Building, San Miguel Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City.

All interested parties who may wish to comment on or oppose the said application should file their comments and/or oppositions on or before the date of hearing. Such parties who may wish to have the details of the application and who shall have manifested to the Commission their desire and intention to participate actively in the proceedings, may request that before the date of hearing, they be furnished with copies of the application by the applicant, which is hereby directed to furnish the parties making such request with copies of the application and its attachments. Likewise, any such interested party may examine the application and other pertinent records filed with the Commission during the usual office hours.

WITNESS, the Honorable **RODOLFO B. ALBANO, JR.**, Chairman, and the Honorable Commissioners, **ALEJANDRO Z. BARIN** and **MARIA TERESA A.R. CASTAÑEDA**, Energy Regulatory Commission, this 17th day of July, 2006 at Pasig City.

(Sgd.) FRANCIS SATURNINO C. JUAN
OIC, Executive Director

(PDI – August 9, 2006)

SEC BUILDING CONDOMINIUM CORPORATION
SEC Building, EDSA, Greenhills
City of Mandaluyong, Metro Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The SEC Building Condominium Corporation, through its Bids and Awards Committee, invites qualified local bidders & contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the EXTERIOR REPAINTING AND INSTALLATION OF ALUMINUM LOUVERS of the SEC Building Condominium Corporation

a. Duly licensed Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships
b. Partnership duly organized under the laws of the Philippines and of which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the interest belongs to citizen of the Philippines; or
c. Contractors duly organized under the laws of the Philippines, and which at least seventy five percent (75%) of the outstanding capital stock belongs to the citizen of the Philippines.

Bidders should have similar completed contract within a period of three (3) years and must be at least fifty percent (50%) of the total cost of the contract to be bid.

Application for Bid Form will be available for issuance starting **August 9 to 16, 2006** at the Company Registration Monitoring Department, 2nd floor, SEC Building, EDSA Greenhills, Mandaluyong City.

Pre-Bid conference will be on **August 17, 2006** at the Company Registration Monitoring Department, 2nd floor, SEC Building

Deadline of submission and opening of Proposal will be on **August 24, 2006**, 10:00 a.m. at the Company Registration Monitoring Department, 2nd floor, SEC Building and immediately thereafter, opening of bids will be held at the said department. Bids submitted after 10:00 a.m. will no longer be accepted.

The SBCC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any required formalities therein and to award the contract to the bidder whose proposal as evaluated is most advantageous to the Condominium Corporation.

SBCC assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the prepration of the bids, nor does it guarantee that any award will be made.

(Sgd.) BENITO A. CATARAN
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–August 9, 2006)

BOHOL I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol
Fax No. (038) 508-8095, Tel. No. (038) 508-0084, 508-0085

INVITATION FOR BIDS NO. 2006-06
(Addendum to Invitation for Bids No. 2006-05)

The **BOHOL I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (BOHECO-I)** thru 5% reinvestment and general fund intends to procure various electrical materials and equipment to be used in our coverage area.

Lot 1 – "LINE HARDWARES"
Lot 2 – "CLAMP, HOTLINE"
Lot 3 – "FUSE CUTOUT, SINGLE SHOT"
Lot 4 – "CIRCUIT BREAKER" w/ weatherproof enclosure, G.E.
Lot 5 – "KWHR METER, OEIC-MITSUBISHI"
Lot 6 – "CONDUCTORS"
Lot 7 – LINEMAN TOOLS & EQUIPMENT
Lot 8 – OIL SWITCH, 15KV, Single Phase, Surplus
Lot 9 – RECLOSER, Single Phase, 7620 Pri, surplus
Lot 10 – VOLTAGE REGULATOR, REFURBISHED
Lot 11 – BY-PASS SWITCH, for Voltage Regulator, Surplus
Lot 12 – CURRENT TRANSFORMER (CT), 15Kv, brand new
Lot 13 – VOLTAGE TRANSFORMER (VT), 15Kv, 70:1 brand new

Sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the above-mentioned materials will be received by **BOHECO-I** at its main office in Maca-as, Tubigon, Bohol on or before August 31, 2006 at 2:30 P.M. at which time and place said proposal would be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their representatives.

The interested bidders may obtain information, secure list of bidding documents from **BOHECO-I** Main Office upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00).

(Sgd.) CARLOS B. ITABLE
General Manager

(PDI – August 9, 2006)

People, Events & Products

Ford obtains state-of-the-art machines

FORD MOTOR COMPANY PHILIPPINES has the most current models of the Coordinate Measuring Machine (CMM) and the 4-wheel Non-Contact Aligner (NCA) in the industry. After weeks of intensive training, these German and Korea-made machines are already in use at the Ford Sta. Rosa facility.

This joint P68-million investment is currently benefiting the Ford Focus, as bulk of Ford's production for both the domestic and export markets are concentrated on this model line. This ensures that the Philippine-built Focus is of the highest quality and performance.

Likewise, the locally assembled model lines of Ford and Mazda are also randomly assessed on the CMM, while all pass through the Non-Contact Aligner at the final line.

The CMM will greatly improve the fitting or alignment of the vehicle's shell. With an accuracy of 40-100 microns, this machine enables the Ford manufacturing team to accurately position sheet metal and trim parts in its exact locations. As a result, customers will experience a reduction in wind noise, will appreciate the ease in opening and closing of all movable panels, and there will be less likelihood for any leaks during the rainy months.

All this is achieved through the dual probes at the end of flexible arms. These slide vertically and horizontally, lightly skimming the crevices of each vehicle and provide an evaluation of the point of joining from the individual trim parts. This tactile assessment is then projected as 3D images onto computers that provide Ford engineers with necessary visual representations and calibrations.

During its early months, initial samples were drawn from among the Ford Focus production lot, i.e. out of the 45 Focus units that the plant produced, four were randomly checked. The Mazda3 was next on its evaluation line-up and was finally followed by sampling from the 75 units that the plant churned out daily.

Ford Motor Company is also the only vehicle manufacturer in the Philippine market with this latest technology of the Zeiss Dual Column Carmet CNC Horizontal Arm CMM.

The 4-wheel Aligner

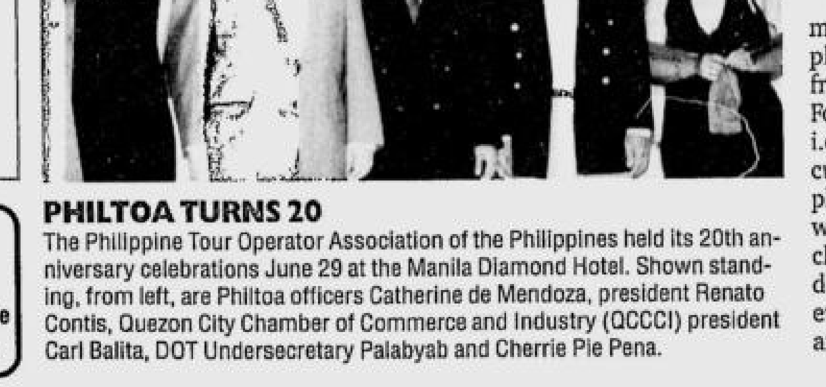
To complement its structural improvement, FMCP has also paid attention to its suspension geometry. Impacting steering and handling performance, the new 4-wheel Non-Contact Aligner is aimed at delivering a higher level of drive performance and driver confidence.

The NCA assesses each of the wheel's angle variance with the use of lasers and cameras and is corrected automatically by the aligner. The process lasts 2.5 minutes on average per vehicle, with accuracy measured at sigma value 0.01 against the industry standard of 0.05 (i.e. the lesser the value, the better the quality).

Both the Coordinate Measuring Machine and the 4-wheel alignment machine improve occupant safety and provide for a better ride.

This move helps Ford further differentiate its products from the rest in the market by providing total customer satisfaction.

Ford's world-class, quality cars are available at Ford Alabang, Ford Balintawak, Ford Commonwealth, Ford Edsa, Ford Libis, Ford Global City, Ford Manila, Ford Quezon Avenue, Ford Shaw Boulevard, Ford Bacolod, Ford Cabanatuan, Ford Cagayan de Oro, Ford Cavite, Ford Cebu, Ford Dagupan, Ford Davao, Ford Iloilo, Ford Pampanga, and Ford San Pablo.



PHILTOA TURNS 20
The Philippine Tour Operator Association of the Philippines held its 20th anniversary celebrations June 29 at the Manila Diamond Hotel. Shown standing, from left, are Philtoa officers Catherine de Mendoza, president Renato Contis, Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCCI) president Carl Balita, DOT Undersecretary Palabyab and Cherrie Pie Pena.

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Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION & COMMUNICATIONS

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Transportation and Communications herein referred to as the "Employer" invites Application for Eligibility and to Bid from contractor/s for the Construction of 4.392 km (4-lanes) Access Road which is one of the components of the Laguindingan Airport Development. The main works included among others are, as follows:

a. Clearing and Grubbing (262,500 sq.m.)
b. Soil Excavation & Hauling (3,951 cu.m.)
c. Limestone Excavation & Hauling (114,326 cu.m.)
d. Portland Cement Concrete Pavement (68,092 sq.m.)

The Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid is **Php 188,768,270.74.**

The Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all firms and voluntarily formed joint ventures holding a PCAB license of General Engineering Large A for Airports and Highways and not barred from bidding by any government agency, office or corporation. In case of Joint Venture, the lead firm and member partners must satisfy the requirements of jointly and severally liable provision for any and all obligations, which the joint venture may incur. All particulars relative to the Eligibility Screening, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bidding Conference(s) shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations.

The request for Eligibility Screening (RES Form 1) may be obtained from the PBAC Secretariat, Office of the PBAC Chairman for Foreign Assisted Air Transportation Sector Projects, Unit 61, 6th Floor, The Columbia Tower, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City from August 16 - 21, 2006, from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM upon payment at DOTC Cashier of non-refundable amount of One Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P1,500.00). Interested bidders shall submit their duly accomplished RES Form 1 and attachments and bring the original copy of the updated PCAB/IAC License and Letter of Intent to the same office not later than 2:00 PM on August 28, 2006.

Eligible applicants shall be notified through a Letter of Eligibility from the PBAC office. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by eligible applicants from the above office after receipt of the Letter of Eligibility and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Fifteen Thousand Pesos (P15,000.00) from 13 - 20 September 2006.

Bids must be delivered to the address given below on or before 2:00 p.m. of October 23, 2006. Late bids will be rejected. Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below:

Office of the PBAC Chairman for
Foreign-Assisted Air Transportation and Communications
Unit 61, 6th Floor, The Columbia Tower Bldg.
Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City, Metro Manila

DOTC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the government and does not guarantee that an award will be made as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) **ROBERT R. CASTAÑARES**
Assistant Secretary and PBAC Chairman
Foreign Assisted Air Transportation Projects

(PDI--Aug. 9, 2006)

AGUSAN DEL SUR ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
San Francisco, Agusan Del Sur
Tel. Nos. (085) 343-8455, 242-3280
Telefax No. (085) 839-2275

INVITATION TO BID

The Agusan del Sur Electric Cooperative, Inc., an electric cooperative with Main Office address located at San Francisco, Agusan del Sur, invites all qualified suppliers to bid for the purchase of the following items:

ITEM	QUANTITY
1. Psion Work about MX, 2MB RS 232	8 Units
2. Extech Series 2500THS • Made in USA • Portable Receipt Printer that makes use of thermal paper with 3 inches width	8 Units
3. Rechargeable Psion Battery	8 Units
4. Work About Charger	2 Units
5. Back up data storage	8 Units

Opening of sealed bids shall be done on August 17, 2006 at 1:30 in the afternoon in the presence of bidders' representatives, Procurement, Bids and Awards Committee, and the Internal Auditor. Bidders are required to submit corresponding 5% bid bond and pay a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 1,000.00 for the bid documents at the start of the bidding.

New Participants shall submit company profile, permits, licenses, and other documents for accreditation before the start of the bidding.

(Sgd.) **URSULO E. ANUTA**
Manager

(PDI – August 8 & 9, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City 1634
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5285

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Various Sizes of Gate Valves Under
FGT 53713 / FGT 53758 / FGT 53759 / FGT 53778 / FGT 61903 / FGT 61909 / FGT 61923 / FGT 61952
Approved Budget: PHP 14,824,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Roderick R. Cabantog** starting **August 2, 2006**, from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **August 10, 2006, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply, Property and Materials Management Division, at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Office Wall Clock Time) of August 24, 2006**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI--August 2 & 9, 2006)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

The **PSORIASIS FOUNDATION OF THE PHILIPPINES, INC.** wishes to inform the general public that the draw date for the **"RAFFLE FOR A CAUSE"** for the benefit of the indigent psoriasis patients in Mindanao which was originally scheduled on August 9, 2006 has been moved to **December 13, 2006.**

The raffle draw date will be held at the Out-Patient Services, Department of Dermatology, Davao Medical Center.

Thank you for bearing with us.

(Sgd.) **Ma. Assumpta Cecilia R. Serrano, M.D.**
President
Psoriasis Foundation of the Philippines, Inc.

(PDI–August 9, 2006)

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NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION

Notice is hereby given that **MAGNALAND DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION** with SEC Registration No. 71154 has shortened its corporate existence effective December 31, 2005, and that the Amended Articles of Incorporation dissolving the corporation will be filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

All persons having valid claims against said corporation are requested to present them at its office at the Roof deck, Multinational Bancorporation Centre, 6805 Ayala Avenue, Makati City, for settlement.

(Sgd.) **MELQUIADES T. MALABANAN**
Legal Counsel

(PDI--Aug. 2, 9 & 16, 2006)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late FELICISIMO J. BAYRON was extrajudicially settled among his heirs as per Doc # 64, Page #13, Book #III, Series of 2006 under Notary Public Justo S. Lopez of Angono, Rizal.

(PDI – Aug. 9, 16 & 23, 2006)

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OBITUARIES

Eng. RICARDO ARANETA VILLARIBA
7 February 1936 – 5 August 2006
Lucena City

We request all to pray for **Ricardo** and to remember him as a loving husband, parent, brother, grandfather and builder of roads and bridges.

Husband to **Anita Orinas** (†)
Parent to **Eric & Myra, Ria & Larry, Maricar, Ricardo Jr. & Sherry, Vianca & Alfonso**
Brother to **Mario** (†), **Cesar, Luz, Cely, Zeny, Oscar & Belle;**
sisters in law, **Nene, Teresing, Thelma**
Grandfather to **Paula, Christine, Angelique, Angelie, Alfonso, Angelica, Lorenzo, Reena & Anne.**

Interment will be August 10, 2006.

LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
Tel. Nos. Q.C.: 712-3001 • 743-6502
Manila – 711-6931 to 35

NAME OF DECEASED	PLACE OF VIEWING	INTERMENT/CREMATION DATE & TIME	INTERMENT/CREMATION PLACE
TAN (ONG) CHIONG GIOK @ Sylvestra Ng Pong Say	Chapel B Quezon City	8/16/2006 9:00 a.m.	Odiongan, Romblon
VIRGILIO M. GOPILAN	Chapel B-8, Quezon City	8/9/2006 2:00 p.m.	Heritage Mem. Park Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

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DEATH NOTICE

ELISEO P. PAMBID
Born: Dec. 10, 1933 – Died: Aug. 6, 2006
Peacefully joined our Creator at the age of 72

His body lies in state at Eusebio Funeral Homes, 172 Gen. Luna St., Malabon.

Interment will be on Aug. 13, 2006 at the place to be announced later.

EUFROCINA M. GALACGAC
Died last August 6, 2006 at the age of 71.

Her body lies in state at the Chapel L of the Old Funeraria Paz Bldg., in Araneta Avenue Quezon City.

Interment will be on August 12, 2006, Saturday.

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

The Board of Directors and Management of the FIRST CABANATUAN VENTURES CORPORATION (FCVC) and the Board of Directors and Management of CABANATUAN ELECTRIC CORPORATION (CELCOR)

Wish to express their sincerest condolences to the family of FCVC Director and Corporate Secretary

ATTY. ROSA MARIA "BAMBI" VERGARA-FALGUI

10 May 1962 – 2 August 2006

We pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

The Assumption HS Batch '79 and the Vergara Family will offer a special mass on 11 August 2006, the 9th day of prayers at 7:00 p.m., Santuario de San Antonio Parish Center, Forbes Park, Makati City.

We would like to invite all relatives and friends to join us in this celebration of Bambi's life.

"I have put a good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith..."
2 Timothy 4:7-8

ATTY. ARNULFO ERICTA BAUA

May 18, 1946 – August 5, 2006

Peacefully joined our Lord and his beloved parents **Dr. Domingo L. Baua** and **Encarnacion G. Ericta.**

His wife **Liza Muguerza Baua**; his children **Ciel, Dino** and **Nikki** and grandson **Gaby**; sisters and brothers-in-law **Nieva Marie & Joeben Laraya, Celia & Bernie Duldulao, Dely & Mike Patolot, Hedy & George Buktaw**, nieces, nephews & relatives, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Montserrat Chapel of Loyola Memorial Park, Sucat Avenue, Parañaque.

Interment will be on **Thursday, August 10, 2006** at the **Manila Memorial Park** after the **8:00 A.M.** Mass at the Montserrat Chapel of Loyola Memorial Park, SucatAvenue, Parañaque.

I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me. John 14:6

"I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die." **John 11:25-26**

CONSUELO "CHOLLY" ROSALES ASUNCION-ANTONIO, MSc.

UST Pharmacy Class '54 (Board Topnotcher)
Master of Science in Pharmacy (Iowa State University)
Former Chief Pharmacist, Cardinal Santos Medical Center
Board of Examiner (Pharmacy), PRC
Former President, Manila Sunshine City Lioness Club
Devoted Wife, Mother and Grandmother
Of Bulan, Sorsogon and White Plains, Q.C.

Passed away in the grace of our Lord on 7 August 2006 at the age of 74.

Her bereaved husband **Silvino P. Antonio, Jr.**; her children **Bambi & Vic, Annie, Beth, Joey & Aura**; her grandchildren **Michelle, Leia, Andrew, Chrissy, Bianca, Margarita & Nina**; her brothers **Roberto** (†), **Jake**; her sisters **Sr. Natividad, D.C., Iluminada, Ophelia** (†), **Sr. Marissa, D.C.** and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows, Quezon City.

Cremation schedule at the Loyola Memorial Park Crematorium, Marikina will be on Saturday, 12 August 2006 at 3 p.m.

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BUSINESS

RP seen to exceed FDI target

BSP says investment prospects will boost BOP surplus

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO SENTRAL NG Pilipinas expects the country to exceed its target of attracting $1.6 billion in net foreign direct investments (FDIs) this year given the upbeat business sentiment here and abroad.

BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo told reporters the improved prospects for investments, along with the upgraded outlook on export earnings and overseas Filipino workers remittances, would allow the country to further build up its balance of payment surplus.

However, Guinigundo said, certain risks remained, such as the ongoing war between Israel and Lebanon in the Middle East.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the domestic economy and the rest of the world. Its major components are the current account and the capital and financial account.

In the first semester of the year, the Philippines yielded a BOP surplus of $2.04 billion, already exceeding the $1.6-billion target for the full year.

"In general, there will be better external payments," Guinigundo said. "It will still be better than target because we think that the current account will improve because of better trade and services."

He added that investments will also raise the capital and financial account.

"But we should also take a look at some of the risks, like what's happening now in the Middle East," Guinigundo said.

He said that the BOP surplus at the end of the year could even be better without the tension in the Middle East, which is seen to jack up global oil prices and, in turn, increase the country's importation bill.

Meanwhile, Guinigundo said FDI flows would likely exceed original forecasts.

"In general, investments will be better than the previous projections," he said. "It will benefit not just property but also mining, power and telecommunications."

Unlike portfolio inflows which are more volatile, FDI flows represent investments in brick-and-mortar businesses that are usually capital- and labor-intensive, such as those spent in building new factories, call centers, power plants, mining ventures or other enterprises.

Based on the BSP's latest BOP data, the country attracted $500 million in net FDIs from January to April this year, flowing mostly to the real estate, banking, manufacturing and construction sectors. These net FDIs marked a 2.7-percent growth from the $487 million posted in the same four-month period last year.

The United States and Japan were still the top sources of long-term equity investments from abroad.

Insurance sector hit by low interest, high taxes

THE DECLINE OF THE DOMESTIC interest rate has hit the insurance industry where it hurts the most—its capability to generate profits.

Speaking on behalf the industry, Philamlife president and chief executive officer Jose L. Cuisia said that, along with low interest rates, insurance firms have to deal with "high" taxes that are being blamed for stifling growth in the industry.

Insurance firms, in need of outlets to invest their premium collections, are some of the major investors in government securities. The drop in interest rates would reduce the profitability of their investments, Cuisia said.

Cuisia said that in order to recover from the declining yields of investments, some insurance firms are forced to increase the cost of their insurance products. Repricing, however, has the adverse effect of reducing sales volume.

"We have to reprice because we cannot afford to sell products that lose money," Cuisia explained.

Interest rates on government securities have been on a decline.

The benchmark 91-day Treasury bill rate dropped by 63.1 basis points to 5.447 percent last week.

Cuisia said that there is a need for reforms the industry, in light of the taxes which the government imposes on insurance firms. The Philippine government has slapped the highest tax rates on insurance firms in Southeast Asia, he added.

The insurance industry is pushing for the reduction, if not lifting, of the documentary stamp tax on insurance premiums and the removal of the premium tax.

Michelle V. Remo

COFFEE BRANCH
A plantation worker studies the colorful beans that are being grown at a coffee experimental farm of Nestle Philippines in Tagum City, Davao Del Norte. DENNIS JAY SANTOS / INQUIRER MINDANAO

Retirement industry gets shot in the arm

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE EUROPEAN CHAMBER OF Commerce of the Philippines yesterday announced that it would do an inventory of existing facilities in the country that could be used to jumpstart the local retirement industry.

Also, the group said it wanted bilateral agreements in place to help develop the sector which, according to local officials, could attract some 20,000 foreign retirees and contribute $1.3 billion in foreign exchange earnings over the next five years.

ECCP executive vice president Henry Schumacher said that the group is urging the government to enter into a bilateral pact with primary target countries for the flagship project under the Philippine Retirement Authority.

Schumacher also said that the Joint Foreign Chambers of Australia-New Zealand, Canada, Europe, Japan, Korea, and the United States have formed a retirement committee that will look into priority areas that need to be addressed for the country to become a retirement haven.

"We support the efforts of the government and the private sector toward the full development of the retirement industry in the country," Schumacher said. "However, before it can be marketed, we must first scrutinize the facilities and the range of accommodations available for foreign retirees."

The official said ECCP would be looking into resort projects with special areas for active adults; existing retirement villages, as well as those under construction, and model communities that have health centers and agreements with leading hospitals.

Moreover, the JFC will look at the lease and sale contracts of suites, condominium units and single detached houses that are available to retirees.

The JFC is also urging the government to set up a system for retirees, stressing that there is a need for special visas, special lanes at the airport, insurance policies accepted at accredited hospitals, he said.

Local officials are aiming at to attract within the next decade some 900,000 long stays, who will create four million jobs and generate an estimated $40 billion in earnings.

5-year T-bond rate dropped to 8.424%

By Michelle V. Remo

THE RATE FOR THE GOVERNment's five-year Treasury bonds dropped by more than two percentage points yesterday to 8.424 percent, as investors further firmed up expectations of an end to the successive hikes in the US interest rate.

The new rate for the five-year bonds was 220.1 basis points lower than the 10.625 percent recorded during its last auction in June.

The decline in the bond rate was backed by strong appetite for the government securities, which were over-subscribed by nearly twice. Volume of bids hit P20.125 billion compared with the government's debt offering of only P7 billion.

The Bureau of the Treasury's auction committee accepted P7 billion worth of bids, thus raising the entire amount of its debt offering.

"This (decline in the bond rate) came on the back of strong fiscal position, liquidity in the market, and interest rate developments globally," National Treasurer Omar Cruz yesterday told reporters.

Bond investors expect the US Federal Reserve to finally put an end to the increases in its key policy rate, which it had been doing since June 2004 as a means to counter inflationary pressures.

The expectation of an end to the rate hikes is anchored on the lower-than-expected growth of the US economy in the second quarter as well as the shortfall in the employment data for July.

The US economy posted a gross domestic product (GDP) growth of only 2.5 percent in the second quarter compared with the projected 3 percent. New jobs generated by the US economy in July only hit 113,000, lower than the 142,000 forecast by analysts. The jobs data led to a 4.8-percent unemployment rate during the month.

Believing that the Fed will not further sacrifice economic growth, investors do not see another hike in the US interest rate, which currently stands at 5.25 percent.

A rise in interest rate, while it tempers inflation, has a dampening effect on an economy. High interest rates makes borrowing more expensive for firms, thus discouraging investments.

The previous increases in the US Fed rate had resulted in the shift of appetite of portfolio investors away from bonds issued by emerging economies like the Philippines. The anticipated end to the hikes, however, has brought back appetite for the debt paper of emerging markets, resulting in the decline in domestic interest rates.

Cruz said liquidity in the domestic market also contributed to the declining interest rates. He said over P7 billion worth of government securities will mature this week, thus beefing up the banking system's cash position.

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Editor Cesar D. Mangawang

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Ethanol debate divides drivers, engineers, manufacturers

By Tessa R. Salazar

(First of two parts)

THE SENATE BILL 2226 OR the Bioefuels Act of 2006 is due for interpellation, but some motorists have jumped the gun and have tried blending ethanol into their gas tanks. Their ethanol supplies have come from oil retailers such as SeaOil and Shell, the latter of which introduced its Super Unleaded E10 (meaning 10 percent ethanol blended) in May this year.

SeaOil's 105 service stations, on the other hand, have already supplied up to 2 million customers since introducing the blended fuel G5 Extreme E10 Aug. 29 last year, according to Rey Jimenez, the oil retailer's media relations officer.

Doubters

The use of ethanol-blended fuels instead of pure-gasoline blend seems to be catching on among a growing number of motorists, and so far at least two oil retailers are filling up this demand. Still, ethanol brings into the picture its share of doubters.

They stress that many carbureted cars (meaning the older model cars produced before the "EFI"—or electronic fuel injection—era) generally cannot be loaded with ethanol-blended fuel.

Not reliable

Allen Rufo, an engineer at Toyota Motors Philippines, said basing the compatibility of ethanol to the year model of the subject vehicle is not a reliable method.

"We're simply not sure what kind of rubber fuel hoses were used, or what kind of replacement hoses were used," he says.

To make sure, Rufo urges motorists to ask their dealerships to actually check the fuel lines of the vehicle.

Rufo warns that alcohol-based fuels such as ethanol could melt plastic and rubber components of the fuel system, the same reaction you will see when paint thinner or acetone is added to plastic and rubber. He added the reaction could be worse or be accelerated if nongenuine parts are used.

A carbureted system itself is bad news for ethanol, Rufo says. The carburetor's "open air" system increases the probability of vapor lock, especially during the hot season. The EFI system, which is a closed system eliminates the possibility of vapor lock.

No liquid fuel available

A vapor lock is a situation when no liquid fuel is available in the fuel line, causing the car to "choke" and stall, explains Rufo.

Jimenez, on the other hand, countered that a Worldwide Fuel Charter data say gasoline blended with just 10 percent ethanol or below is harmless.

Shell Philippines, which has made available ethanol-blended fuel in four of its stations since three months ago, will release a list of vehicles supposedly compatible with ethanol-blended fuel. The list is available at the four sites, and a good percentage of these vehicles are models 2003 and above.

Auto mechanic Olson T. Camacho, who has been using 25-percent ethanol blended fuel in his Suzuki Fronte and Lancer GLXi for three years before selling the vehicles, stresses a 10 percent blend is "very, very safe."

Camacho explains that a 10 percent blend of ethanol, which is a water-based fuel, would have minimal effects on rubber hoses. He does admit, though, that after two or three years, the hoses would eventually become brittle.

"By that time, however, vehicle owners are already expected to change their cars anyway," Camacho says.

Ethanol voiding warranties?

Car manufacturers choose the safe side when it comes to their views on ethanol. They urge motorists to check with their dealers first to make sure they are not putting any existing warranties at risk.

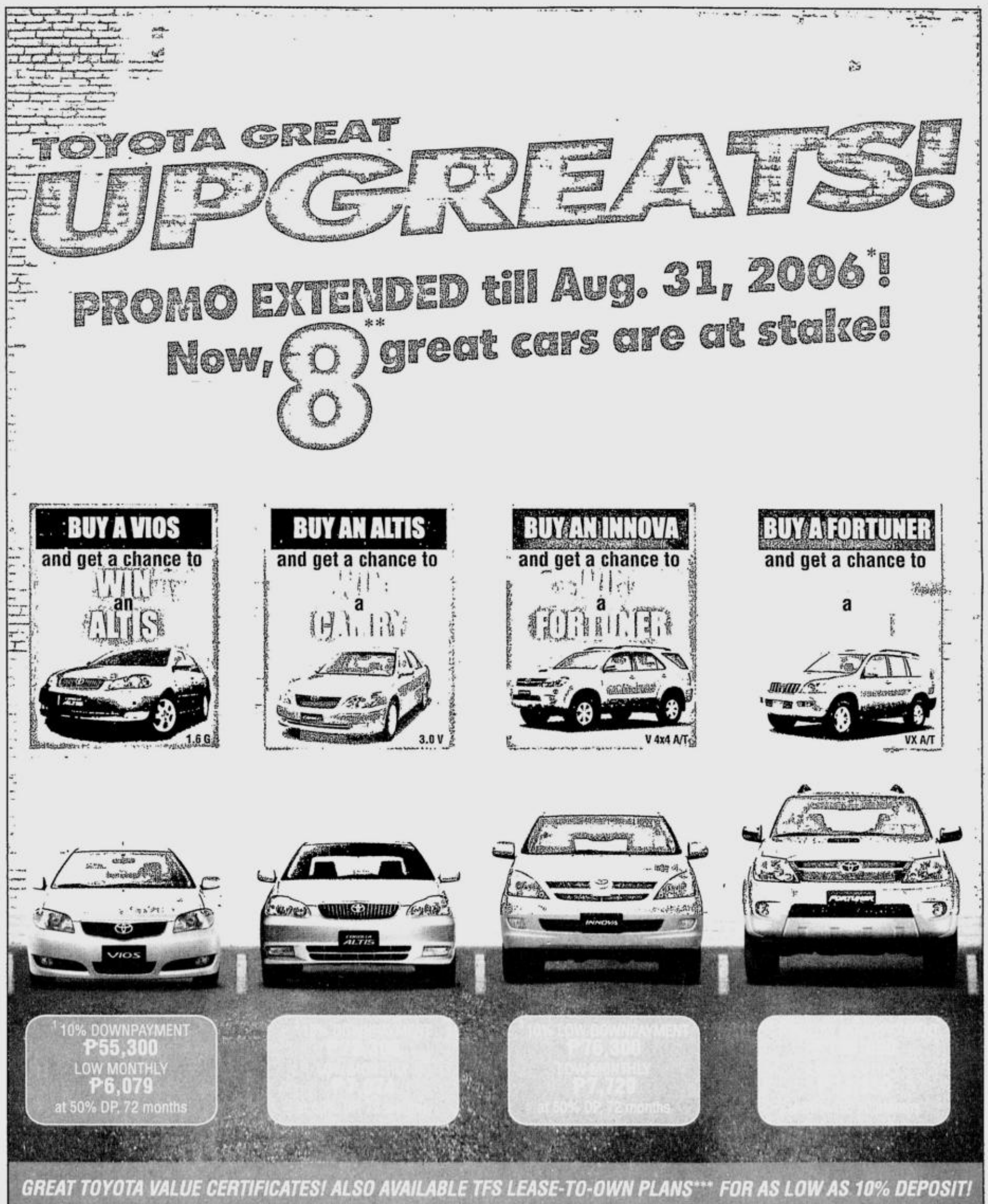
The Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines' (Campi) Aug. 7 statement clearly says that "any problem that may be caused or proven to be attributable to the use of fuel or additives not recommended or approved by the manufacturer, after conducting an appropriate test and investigation, shall cause the warranty of such vehicle to be considered null and void."

It adds: "Covered within this purview include problems directly affecting the following systems or components of the motor vehicle: fuel tank and fuel lines; engine fuel pump and injector; combustion chambers; exhaust systems; and other related functional components."

Campi, however, states that most of the current models of its members are compatible with biofuels as specified under the Worldwide Fuel Charter. It would still be best, however, if owners consulted the manufacturers first before loading up with ethanol.

An ethanol and alco-gas user who refuses to be named said ethanol-blended fuel has been successfully integrated in gasoline fuels used in Brazil and in the United States. His main concern with the gasoline used here, he says, is if the catalyst being used by Shell Philippines and SeaOil Philippines has made sure that ethanol will not "separate from the gasoline."

He urges these fuel suppliers to give assurances to local consumers that the ethanol-gasoline mix has been done right, the way it has been done in countries which have successfully integrated ethanol in its conventional fuel supplies.



On the road in Vancouver

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA, Canada—One of the first things that the natives of Vancouver say you must do when you arrive here is to tour the Butchart Gardens in Victoria. Having arrived here at the height of the summer season to visit my immigrant daughter Andrea, I found this national historic site to be open from 9 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. up to Sept. 2. Fortunately, the heat wave that was withering Ontario had spared Vancouver and the weather was perfect for a drive out to Victoria.

Andrea and her friend Karl decided to rent a small car for our one-day tour. The cost of renting a Toyota Yaris (a.k.a. the Echo in Manila) subcompact for two days came to a total of Canadian $172 (P8,084 at the C$1:P47 exchange rate.) I was assigned to drive while Karl acted as navigator and Andee as commentator/backseat driver.

120 kph

In the morning of Aug. 4 from Rees Road in Richmond where Andee and Karl rent an apartment, we took the No. 99 highway and then onward to No. 17 highway to reach the Tsawwassen terminal of the BC Ferry going to Victoria. Along the way, I saw road signs stating speed limits ranging from 50 to 90 kilometers per hour, but none of the drivers seemed to mind them. So there were times we were traveling at 120 kph.

The midnight black Yaris, equipped with an automatic transmission but manually operated windows, had enough chutzpah to keep pace with bigger cars on flat roads. However, it strained to go up steep upgrades and strangely enough, the central locking was located in the front door, not the driver's door.

BC ferry

The ferry ticket cost C$24 (P1,128) per person for us since we were in a subcompact. The BC ferry, 119.41 meters long, has six decks capable of accommodating 300 motor vehicles (including big tourist buses and container vans) and 1,708 passengers. It comes complete with a cafeteria and a book/souvenir gift shop. The trip to Swartz Bay, Victoria island lasts one hour 40 minutes during which a tour guide on deck talks about the history of the islands that the ferry passes by and the flora and fauna. The ferry ride was pleasant and scenic, but nothing compared to the flowers, trees and plants of Butchart Gardens.

As the ferry approached the harbor of Swartz Bay, we were told to go back to our cars but not to start the engine until the signal was given. Since the Yaris was one of the last to roll onto the ferry, we trailed behind the other cars in rolling off onto the dock. But the drive to Butchart Gardens was a relatively short one, so it did not matter.

Butchart

The Butchart Gardens were developed starting in 1904 on the 50-acre private estate of Mrs Jennie Butchart, who aimed to beautify a limestone quarry that had supplied her husband's nearby cement plant. This piece of paradise abloom with rare and exotic shrubs, trees and flowers from all over the world celebrated its centennial two years ago and was declared a National Historic Site of Canada. Even if you do not appreciate plants and gardens, the Butchart Gardens with its Sunken Garden, Rose garden, Japanese garden, Italian garden, Star Pond and Rose Fountain will surely impress and delight you. The entrance fee of C$23 (P1,081) per person is well worth it.

The best time to go to the Butchart Gardens is on a weekday when it's summer. If you have to go on a Friday, a weekend or a holiday, be there at around 5 or 6 p.m., when most of the tourists have departed and the parking lot is no longer full.

Long lines

We learned this on the way back to the ferry. We left Butchart Gardens at 5:45 p.m. but had to wait up to 8 p.m. to board the ferry because of the long lines of cars going back to Vancouver.

When Karl returned the Yaris to the car rental outlet after it had been driven around for two days, he only had to refill it to full tank with C$17.75 (P834.25) of basic/regular unleaded gasoline or 15 liters at C$1.20 (P56.40 per liter). Once again, the Toyota Yaris had proven its fuel efficiency.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: The man who reads nothing at all is better educated than the man who reads nothing but newspapers. (Thomas Jefferson)

* * *

(E-mail comments to aida_sevilla@yahoo.com.)

Trend

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

IT USED TO BE THAT THE STANDARD reason given on what influences one to buy a vehicle is looks. But that's as far as the Filipino car buff is concerned. Other nationalities, like Americans, have different attitudes and preferences, if not tastes. Different folks, different strokes.

But among many Filipinos, the "external" is the ultimate; the outside appearance influences the Filipino which car make or model he/she will buy. That is why even ultraconservative carmakers like Volvo have, in recent years, somewhat went with the flow and leaned on designs that catered to modernist approaches. Did they have the Filipino car aficionado in mind when Volvo engineers made the dramatic image switch?

But the trend is changing again. Seemingly, the fad these days is to go for fuel efficiency more than anything. And that's understandable. Gasoline/diesel prices are going up just as fast as Tiger Woods raises the bar of golfing excellence. Just days ago, Shell announced it would up its prices—by a staggering P1 per liter of gasoline—any day now.

So, almost everybody now asks himself/herself before buying a car: Is the car I intend to buy economical? How many kilometers to a liter will it cover? Will my new car have a substantial bite on my monthly budget?

Suddenly, we are all gas consumer-conscious.

* * *

Actually, the four most common factors that influence car buyers are efficiency, durability, design and the resale power of the brand.

Is the car efficient in the sense that it burns fuel well and is equipped with a reliable engine that runs with clockwork precision virtually at all times?

Is it dependable through thick and thin, licking the elements and the oftentimes bad condition of our roads, and going strong as ever five years after it had been bought?

Is its design presentable enough as to make heads turn once in a while when cruising on a busy road?

Will it still command a good price if sold five years later?

In March this year, the Isuzu D-Max sold 506,101 units in Thailand to break the all-time record of 480,219 units sold in 2005 in the world's longest-serving kingdom (King Bhumibol). Officials of Thailand's Isuzu Tri-Petch attributed their sales success to the D-Max's "efficiency, durability, design and resale power."

I guess those four factors can stand the test of time.

* * *

A recent Reuters dispatch said Honda and Toyota scored gigantic strides anew in the United States in July—with Honda outselling Daimler-Chrysler and Toyota selling more cars in the United States than Ford Motor Co.

Reason given was the spiraling of gasoline prices.

Said Reuters: "With gasoline prices in near record highs, demand in the United States, the world's biggest car market, has been concentrated on Toyota and rival Honda Motor Co."

What can I say except—"low-bat" Asimo and all—three cheers to the two, who were both pioneers in building the world's first gasoline misers in the form of hybrid vehicles that run on a combination of fossil fuel, battery cell, electricity and solar power.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Genuine spare parts are expensive but in the long run, you save on costs because cheaper buys like surplus materials, break down so easily that you keep on replacing them.

* * *

Send comments to menju@pldtdsl.net.

Off the streets please

MY DRIFT

Andre Palma

I HAVE TO CONFESS TO BEING INSOMniac. Lucky days find me sleeping way past midnight and seeing the sunrise is a pretty common thing for me actually. One can only do so much reading and attempting to write the next great road trip novel is quite difficult when spreadsheets and inventory issues keep one's mind spooling as well.

What I've turned to is a lot of night driving as it is something that I've found that calms me. My mind wanders less, preoccupied I'm sure with the motions and thoughts that take me over when roads open up and traffic thins out. Gearing and rpm, potholes, other motorists, practicing my throttle technique under braking and shifting, chassis balance—all these put me in a serene place, where all that matters is the road, the car and the driver. This is my meditation and, in all honesty, this is probably the way I pray.

Juvenile need for speed

Trouble is I've been getting disturbed as of late, and rudely at that, by people who think that the streets of Metro Manila after midnight are their personal playground for their racing fantasies. I'm not going to get all preachy about the dangers of road racing as the psychology of it, its inherent danger, might just actually tempt people into indulging their adrenaline fixes and their juvenile need for speed.

Often times, I'll get a set of headlights looming large in my rearview mirror accompanied by an engine whine that tells me that the car behind me is just too close for comfort. The trick is not to give them any sort of signal that you too are looking for trouble. All I do these days is signal a lane change and get the heck out of the way. This is something that has taken years for me to actually practice in the face of wanting to downshift and speed away.

I will not wash my hands either from this gravest of public safety sins. I'll confess again to having given in to the urge to play recklessly with other drivers, mostly in my idle youth. I've seen crashes and accidents because of this admittedly immature behavior. Growing up driving in the '90s meant having to drive in Manila streets that were full of public works construction. It was insane that, people still drove the way they did, flat out and mere inches from disaster. Friends got hurt; many lost their cars, some people died.

Against road racing

The question must be asked then, was all of this bravado and careless behavior worth it? An emphatic no is the only real answer to that. How can property damage and the loss of human life be worth any sort of thrill-seeking satisfaction? Yet despite this clear argument against road racing, there will be those that just need to be able to drive on the edge and honestly those that want to hone their skills. The answer for them lies beyond public roads and in the relatively safe confines of a track or a closed road course.

I already know the protests that will come from those who oppose the "keep it off the streets" lobby. Organized racing is time consuming, expensive and the safety requirements just take all the fun and risk out of the speed. Take it from me; neither argument holds any sort of weight.

All one needs to do is look at what safe venues for velocity are out there. It is my humble opinion that whatever kind of speed buzz one is looking for, whatever sort of driving challenge, there is an event or organization that can meet it.

So I ask those who still prowl the streets of Metro Manila after midnight, please consider the rest of us who are using the roads too. As much as I understand what is going on in your mind, please take it off the streets. Grow up a little, if only to let the rest of us rest easy at night.

MOTORSCOPE

X-Trail now with more features

TO CELEBRATE THE X-TRAIL'S success in the Philippine market, Nissan Motor Philippines Inc. is offering starting Aug. 7 a special package for the 4x4 variants, which makes Nissan's extreme SUV loaded with more features and offering one of the best value-for-money deals.

The special package for the X-Trail 4x4 includes ceiling-mounted DVD system with a 9.2-inch screen, body graphics and back sensor. Bought and installed separately, the new additions cost at least P41,500.

Based on market surveys of compact SUV owners, one of the most sought after features in vehicles used for long distance travel is a DVD mobile entertainment system.

To further spice up the X-Trail, Nissan dealers will offer a special price, covering a limited time period for all the X-Trail variants. The 250X now retails for P1,300,000 from P1,360,000. The 200X is now at P1,200,000 from P1,250,000 and the 2.0L 4x2 now sells at P1,100,000 or a P40,000 adjustment from normal retail price.

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Blasting its way into RP's . . .

From page B2-4

fiers, subwoofers, speakers and accessories.

The first two Sony Xplōd Centers, Goldrich Car Accessories and Endless Passions Car Accessories, are located on Banawe, Quezon City, a mecca for automotive parts, supplies and accessories.

Beginning

"Sony in the Philippines has been in the car audio business for the past eight years. This time, however, we want to be more aggressive and in opening up the first two Xplōd Centers, Sony Philippines is sounding off its intention to extend its leadership in the car audio market," said Hiroaki Kobayashi, Sony Philippines president and managing director.

He added that the move is also to acknowledge the country's fast growing demand for quality car audio products. In fact, Sony Philippines is now planning to set up more Xplōd Centers around the country with Dasmariñas in Cavite, Cebu City, Bacolod City in Negros Occidental and Davao City, among the next areas being considered.

One advantage of having an Xplōd Center, according to Kobayashi, is that customers will be offered with a full collection of Sony's premium car audio products.

Not only to attract ardent car tuners, Sony Philippines also wants to entice the rest of the country's car enthusiasts who want more from their standard car audio system.

50% share

Sony Philippines hopes that with the recent introduction of several models under the Xplōd series, the company would be able to corner as much as a 50 percent share of the country's mobile electronics market.

"Sony Xplōd's esthetically and functionally advanced designs attracts a growing numbers of car owners who loves to personalize or customize their ride," Kobayashi explained.

Kobayashi revealed several reasons the Xplōd series is always on top of every car tuner's list:

• Each Sony Xplod features a car audio head unit model that comes with one gigabyte of flash memory, an AM/FM receiver, a CD and MP3 player.

• Its advanced technology allow integration and connectivity to Sony's wide range of audio-video products such as the Sony Network Walkman, PlayStation Portable and even the Sony Ericsson phones.

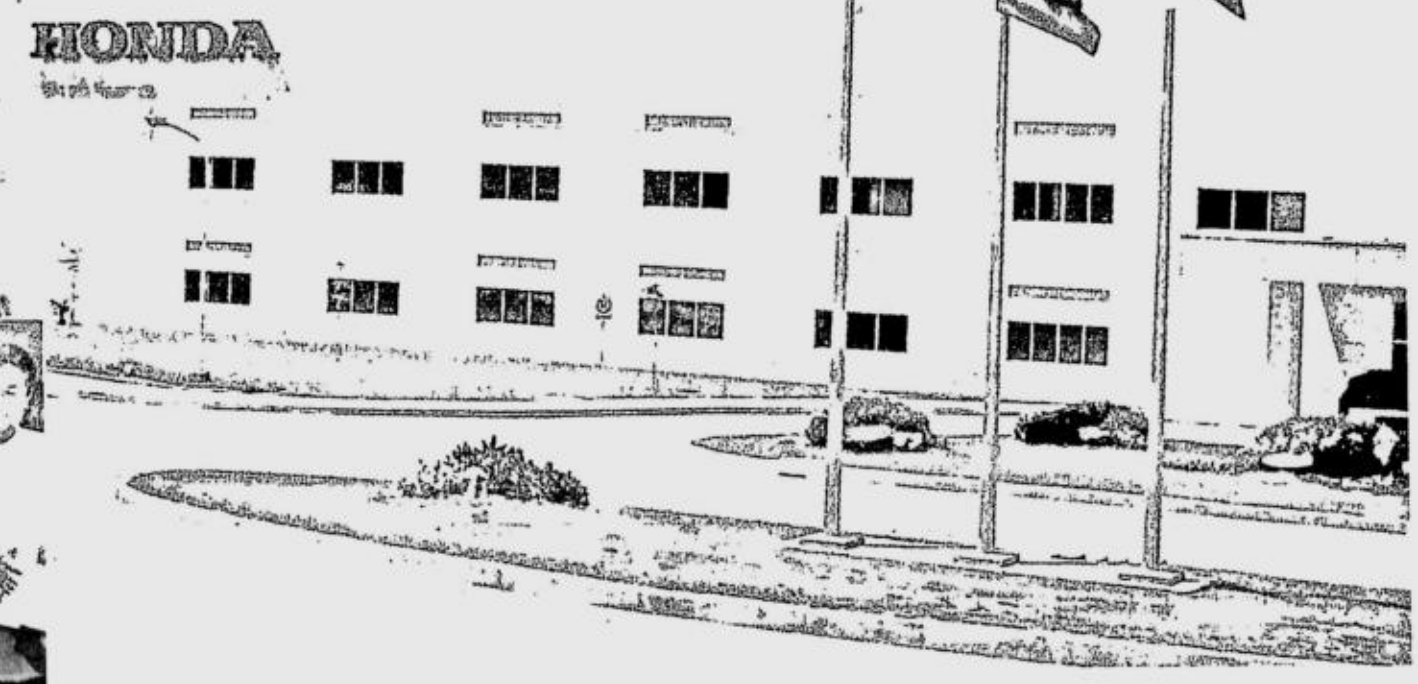
• "Moreover, it is capable of storing up to 500 music tracks from the user's personal computer—the car audio's faceplate can be removed and connected to a personal computer using its USB port. This allows users to transfer their music from their PC to the removable faceplate and playback songs in MP3, WMA and Sony's ATRAC3/3 plus formats. Now that's comprehensive connectivity and playability as never before witnessed in car audio products," said Kobayashi.

SONY Xplod's advanced technology allows integration and connectivity to Sony's wide range of audio-video products.

Honda Philippines Inc.
inaugurates new manufacturing facility

Mr. Takeo Fukui, President and Chief Executive Officer of Honda Motor Co. Ltd. of Japan delivers his speech during HPI's plant inauguration

Mr. Kazuhiko Ikezoe shares his thoughts as he welcomes guests and friends from the media



Honda Officials (from left to right; Mr. Kazuhiko Ikezoe, Mr. Takeo Fukui, Mr. Koji Matsuno & Mr. Rene Gener) together with Ms. Lilia de Lima gives a warm applause to Pres.Arroyo as she rides the Special Edition of Honda XRM

July 19, 2006 was a red-letter day for the motorcycle industry in the Philippines. On that eventful day, Honda Philippines Inc. (HPI) inaugurated its new P1.8-billion motorcycle manufacturing plant in ceremonies led by no less than Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo. Joining the President in this momentous occasion was Takeo Fukui, president and chief executive officer of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. of Japan and Kazuhiko Ikezoe, president and general manager of Honda Philippines, Inc. (HPI). Honda's new motorcycle plant is located at the First Philippine Industrial Park (FPIP) in Tanauan City, Batangas.

The new plant sits on a 20-hectare property and boasts an annual production capacity of 500,000 motorcycle units, expandable to 1 million units.

After the unveiling, President Arroyo, Fukui, and Ikezoe, in the presence of other honored guests that included Atty. Lilia de Lima, PEZA director general; Tatsuhiro Oyama, president and director of Asian Honda Motor Co., Ltd and managing director and chief operating officer of Honda Asia-Oceania Bloc; Masaya Yamashita, managing director and operations officer of Honda Kumamoto Factory; Ambassador Benjamin Sanvictores, chairman of the board Honda Phils., among others, proceeded to tour HPI's assembly plant. President Arroyo then joined Fukui in climbing aboard the fully assembled motorcycle units lined up at the end of the assembly line. Arroyo tried for herself the Honda XRM110 – the No.1 and the biggest selling model in the Philippines today.

Photos of Mrs. Arroyo and Fukui each riding on fully assembled XRM110s were carried prominently by leading dailies the day following the inauguration.Fukui said that the new Batangas plant is Honda's newest plant to-date in Asia and that it is only the Japanese vehicle manufacturing giant's third in the region to have the capacity to produce up to one million units. He then expressed his gratitude for the "invaluable support and kindness of the government and local people of Tanauan City, Batangas," which paved the way for the smooth start-up of Honda's new motorcycle plant. Citing the strong growth in sales of Honda's motorcycle models in the Philippines market, Fukui also noted that, "Honda is the leading force" in the Philippines motorcycle market as a result of overwhelming patronage of Filipino consumers.

In appreciation of this special relationship between Honda and its customers nationwide, and to fulfill its target of 1 million unit sales by 2010, Honda Philippines pledged to use "the latest Honda global technology and (introduce) products which are beyond customers' expectations and at the best affordable price," added Honda motor CEO Fukui. Top priority, according to Fukui is HPI's "effort to social contribution such as safety riding activities and the development of new technology for eco-friendly mobility". HPI is currently in the process of converting its former assembly plant in Parañaque into the biggest and most advanced safety riding and driving academy in the Philippines.

For his part, Ikezoe said that over the decades, HPI has contributed in a significant way to the "development of the motorcycle industry in the Philippines". Ikezoe added that although the traditional mindset of the Filipino is that "motorcycles are for tricycles only", Honda's continued model development has made Filipinos "discover that solo-model motorcycles are essential transportation". For the Filipino family, given the ever increasing cost of living, it definitely makes sense as motorcycles are "very economical, convenient, fun, comfortable and exciting".

In the last five years, Ikezoe added, "The motorcycle market had grown dramatically due to the increase in the solo (models) market demand".

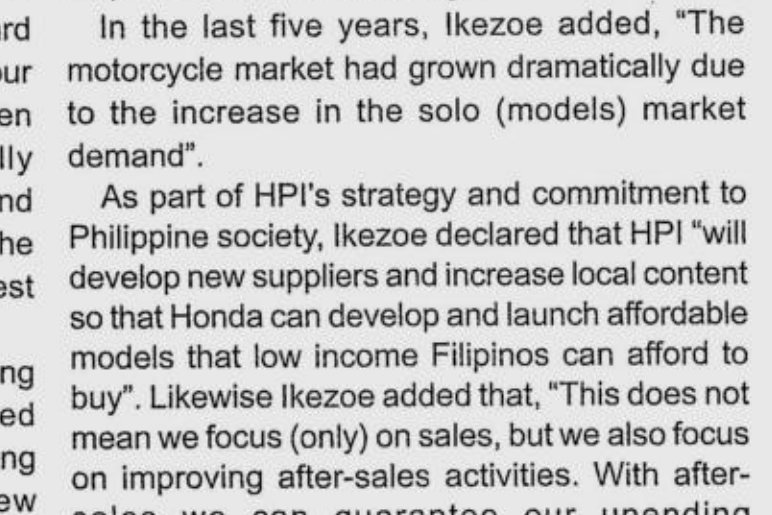
As part of HPI's strategy and commitment to Philippine society, Ikezoe declared that HPI "will develop new suppliers and increase local content so that Honda can develop and launch affordable models that low income Filipinos can afford to buy". Likewise Ikezoe added that, "This does not mean we focus (only) on sales, but we also focus on improving after-sales activities. With after-sales we can guarantee our unending commitment to our customers."

Honda's new manufacturing plant in Batangas currently employs some 1,600 employees and produces an average of 1,500 units per day, to meet the ever increasing domestic demand for Honda's motorcycles models.

Photo shows President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (3rd from left) and Mr. Takeo Fukui, Pres and CEO of Honda Motor Co., Ltd. unveiling the inauguration marker. Others in photo are (from left to right) Amb. Benjamin Sanvictores, HPI's Chairman of the Board, Ms. Lilia de Lima of PEZA, Mr. Tatsuhiro Oyama of Asian Honda Motor Co., Ltd., Mr. Kazuhiko Ikezoe HPI President, and Mr. Masaya Yamashita of Honda Kumamoto Plant

From left to right, photo shows Mr. Masaya Yamashita, Mr. Takeo Fukui, Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, Mr. Kazuhiko Ikezoe and Mr. Tatsuhiro Oyama holding their "masu" in their Hapi costume during the traditional Japanese Sake' Ceremony.

(From Left to right) Mr. Koji Nakazono **of Asia Oceania Operations, Mr. Kazuhiko Ikezoe, Mr. Takeo Fukui, Usec.Elmer Hernandez and Sec. Leandro Mendoza**



Pres. Arroyo, Ms. Lilia de Lima and other guests are welcomed by ASIMO (Honda's Humanoid Robot)

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Blasting its way into RP's motoring market

UNIQUE speaker design makes Sony Xplōd among the most sought-after accessories in the car after market business.

By Charles E. Buban

FOR THOSE WHO STILL think Sony is just into home appliances, cell phones, digital cameras, computers, PlayStation, music and movies, well think again. Sony, which one of the most recognized brand names in the world, is now staking claim on the leadership of the country's car audio market.

COMPLETE one's car audio setup with a video monitor.

Sony Philippines recently announced the opening of its first two concept stores dedicated solely to its Xplōd line of car audio products that include head units, visuals, ampli-

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso** *Chief of Correspondents* **Pam Pastor**

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What it's like

Part Three

While this is the last in our series of three 'What It's Like' issues, it is not the end of the stories.

Last week, we asked you to submit your own stories. Your responses have been so overwhelming that we've decided to make 'What It's Like' a regular section. Because everyone has a story.

Tell us the tales of your life—e-mail Ls_2bu @inquirer.com.ph

Violated by a man of the cloth

By Sabine Strohem

WOULD YOU BELIEVE A 10-year-old girl if she said she had been sexually molested by a priest? That it happened inside the very institution to which her parents had entrusted her safety?

I had been that girl and it happened a long time ago, long before the raging controversy on sexually abusive priests in the United States took place.

While my family was not piously religious, we do believe in God and we did go to church every Sunday. My parents sent me to a Catholic school in the hopes that I would grow up getting the best education and knowing the difference between wrong and right.

VIOLATED/ C3

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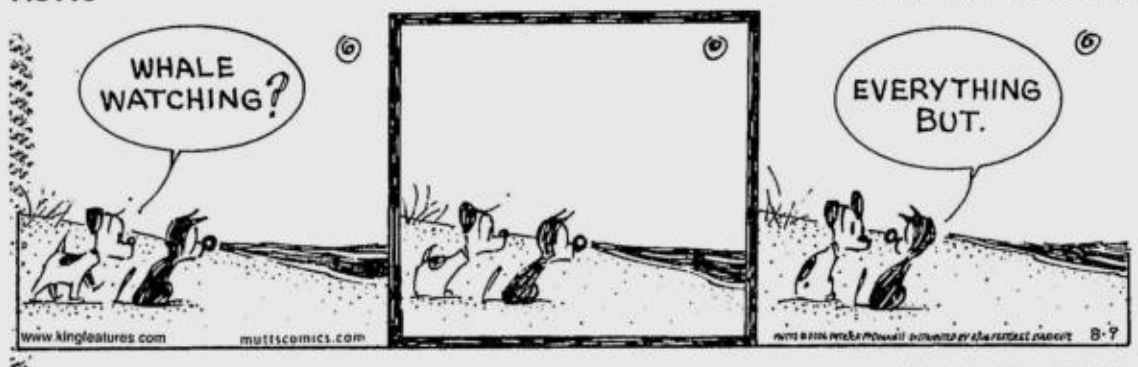
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT

PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR

MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL

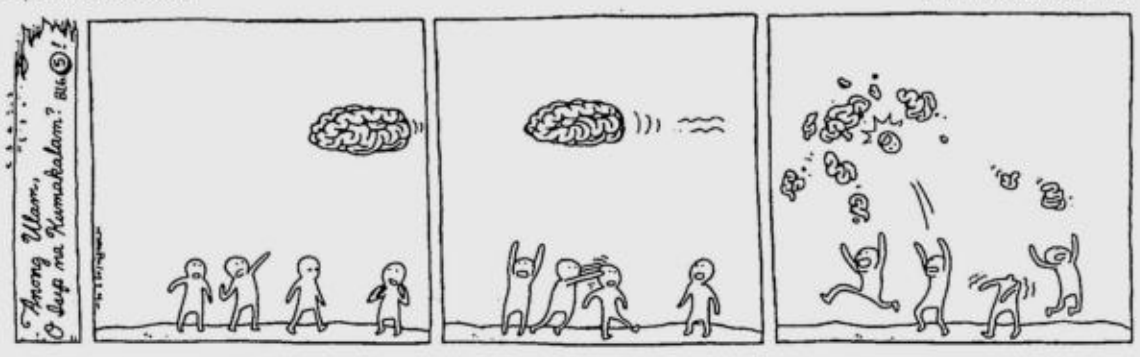


LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO

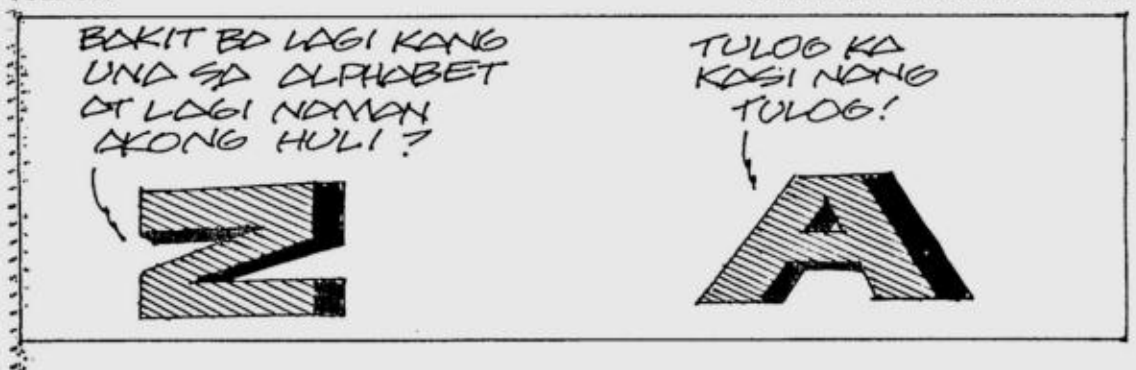
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS

KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA



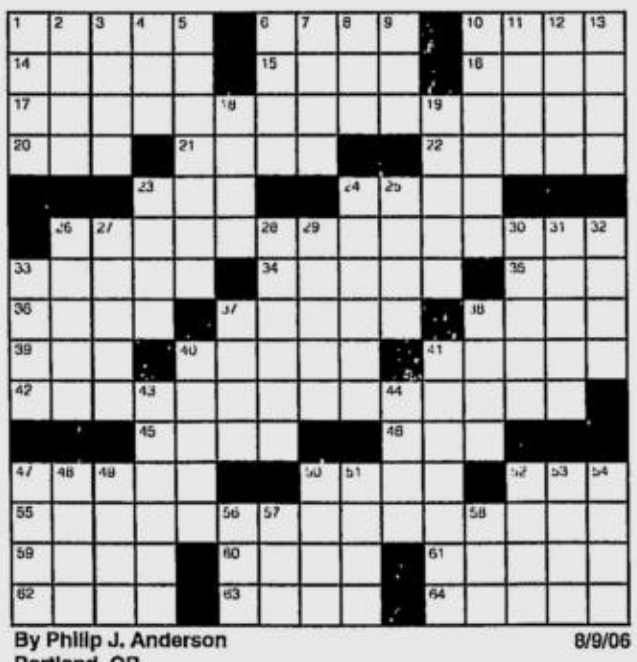
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING



BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
8/9/06

ACROSS
1 Fragrant compound
6 Abrupt yank
10 Part of U.A.E.
14 Hindu mystic
15 Zeno's home
16 Author Jaffe
17 Seconds
20 UFO passengers
21 "Trinity" author
22 Sen. Kefauver
23 Highland hat
24 Cautionary word
26 Seconds
33 Duty lists
34 Encourages
35 Unit of resistance
36 Bailiff's call
37 Hollywood idols
38 Great Plains tribe
39 Mal de __
40 Nearby
41 Shape of fashion
42 Seconds
45 Shapes with an axe
46 Wall St. debut
47 Unmoving
50 Shapely fruit
52 Slugger's stat
55 Seconds
59 Movie dog
60 Prison uprising
61 Mist
62 Putin's refusal
63 Auto pioneer
64 Gladden

DOWN
1 Salinger lass
2 "M*A*S*H" co-star Loretta
3 Summer shades
4 Ostrichlike bird
5 Formalized acts
6 "Star Wars" characters
7 Wallach and Whitney
8 RPM word
9 Bandleader Winding
10 Grain bristle
11 Cheer
12 Frank or Francis
13 Quartet member
18 Witty Bombeck
19 Transmits
23 Afternoon socials
24 Thermometer increment
25 Change for a five
26 Senior member
27 In __ (unborn)
28 Private teachers
29 Discarded material
30 Out
31 Leather strip
32 "Peter Pan" pirate
33 "Arrivederci __"
37 Did in a dragon
38 Spicy stew
40 Huntley and Atkins
41 Authorize
43 Scare tactic
44 O'Flaherty or Neeson
47 Lendl of tennis
48 Too curious
49 Diminutive ending
50 Rouse to action
51 Dines
52 Philbin's co-host
53 Word with camp or out
54 Concerning
56 To and __
57 Slick liquid
58 Russian chess master

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

R	A	T		S	K	I	F	F		P	A	S	S	E
O	D	E		O	I	L	E	R		A	S	H	E	N
B	E	N	B	U	S	I	N	E	S	S	F	O	O	T
E	L	L	I	P	S	E		D	E	C	A	T	U	R
S	E	E	R		E	D	S		M	A	R	B	L	Y
			A	C	A	D		P	O	P	L	A	R	
S	I	G	H	S		C	U	R	E		S	O	I	L
T	R	U		K	I	L	M	E	R	S		T	A	B
S	E	E	P		B	O	O	S		K	A	H	N	S
			D	E	S	I	G	N		G	I	D	E	
C	H	I	D	E	D		E	L	O		A	R	C	O
R	E	P	A	V	E	S		O	P	E	N	B	A	R
A	P	P	L	E	M	O	U	T	H	B	O	A	R	D
S	T	E	E	R		A	T	S	E	A		N	N	E
S	A	R	D	S		P	E	A	R	Y		G	E	R

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HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: Not only do you get along with others, but people need and count on you for support. Since you're naturally giving, this is easy for you. You're so articulate and persuasive that others always respond to your words. In part, this is because you understand the human psyche and what makes others tick. You will study and learn something very important this year.
Birthdate of: Gillian Anderson, actress; Sam Elliott, actor; Whitney Houston, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You have to acknowledge friends and groups today. Today's Full Moon demands this. Be friendly with everyone you meet. Get out there and press the flesh.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Today's Full Moon could bring stress to your relationships with bosses, parents, teachers and VIPs. Don't push the river. Take it easy. See which way the wind is blowing.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Avoid political, religious and philosophical arguments with others today. Don't get hung up on something. The truth is that we are all more alike than we are different. (Everyone wants to be happy; no one wants to suffer.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions about how to share something could come to a head today. Avoid quarrels or disagreements. Today's Full Moon can make some people a bit impatient or overly emotional. (Yikes.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is the only Full Moon all year that directly opposes your sign. That's why conversations with partners and close friends seem to be going south. Patience is your only recourse.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with coworkers today. The Full Moon will create extra tension in areas related to your health and your employment. No big deal. Just be tolerant and understanding of others.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The course of true love never runs smoothly. But then, the course of true anything never runs smoothly! Be extra-patient when dealing with children today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today's Full Moon makes conversations with parents and bosses a bit more emotional than usual. Avoid knee-jerk reactions. Be diplomatic and understanding.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): There are none so deaf as those who are wearing headphones. You cannot preach to people with a closed mind. Therefore, don't even try.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Today's Full Moon could produce tension regarding decisions about shared property. Therefore, postpone this kind of discussion for two or three days.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Today's Full Moon is in your sign. This is the only Full Moon in Aquarius all year. Naturally, you'll feel more emotional or excited about things. Just be cool.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Do not take offense if you think someone says something that slights you. This might not be the case. The Full Moon today makes everyone a bit touchy.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

			9			3		
			7			4		
6	3	1	4			8		
						1	9	5
2	4	5						
		8			5	7	3	1
		7			9			
		4			6			

Difficulty Level ★★★ 8/09

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

6	7	5	4	8	3	9	2	1
9	1	3	7	2	6	5	4	8
2	4	8	5	9	1	7	6	3
4	2	1	9	6	7	3	8	5
5	3	6	8	1	4	2	9	7
8	9	7	2	3	5	4	1	6
7	5	9	6	4	8	1	3	2
1	8	4	3	5	2	6	7	9
3	6	2	1	7	9	8	5	4

Difficulty Level ★★ ★★★

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

He was 'simpatico' and everybody respected him. But he breached the trust of young girls who looked up to him

Violated by a man of the cloth

From page C1

I remember that one of the first lessons I learned in that school was to face the cross, put my hands together and bow my head down when I say my prayers.

Before I received my first Holy Communion in second grade, I remember how our teachers crammed to teach us the seven sacraments, new church songs and the parts of the Mass to prepare us for the sacrament.

I remember how we practiced each responsorial psalm, our cues to sit, stand and kneel, and "Our Father" until all in my batchmates reached synchronized perfection.

Sometimes, our school priest would attend these sessions. I remember how my classmates and I would get off our sits and rush toward him so we could ask for his blessings through "*pagmamano*."

I had always been in awe of him. He had a kindly face, one that would make you warm up to him instantly. Whenever I would meet him in corridors and lobbies, he would return my big smile and greetings with one of his own.

He listened to me with compassion every time I confessed all my venial and mortal sins. He was pivotal to my "state of my grace" at that time. I remember how I tried my best to walk as elegantly as possible whenever I received my Communion so that I could impress him.

His sermons on our monthly Mass would make me laugh and reflect at the same time. He always asked us to be good children and I always listened to him.

I had always been envious with other students who could come up to him and chat with him about how their day went. I wished I was brave, popular and smart enough to be able to approach him.

When I grew older, our school basketball team won the championship for the first time in years. I was elated. During the victory parade I was surprised when the priest approached me and asked me how much I liked our team.

I jumped excitedly while I talked so I guess he realized that I was in love with him. He said that he had a complete collection of the photos of the players and that he would give them to me when I come to his office if he was not busy.

Awakening

I remember that weeks after that, I frequently dropped by his office to check if he was busy or not. Then there was this one afternoon when his office was awfully quiet.

I knocked on his door, when he saw that it was me, he asked me to come in and to lock the doors behind me. He said he didn't want any other students to know that he would give me the basketball team's photos as this might be favoritism.

He asked me to sit on the chair across his. We talked for a few minutes and then he asked me if I could sit on his lap. I did. At that time, I found nothing weird or wrong with the request.

That was when he started to hug me and grope my private parts. I remember I felt hurt but I was not able to scream. My brains just stopped functioning and to this day I cannot remember how I was able to get out of his office.

I avoided him like crazy the next few days. I got angry with him and considered telling my friends, teachers, parents, anyone about what happened.

But when I saw him, I saw how kids would rush to him smiling, vying for his attention; I would see how my teachers would scramble to make him comfortable. I also remember how my mom would praise how he was very kind and looked sweet.

I thought no one would believe me. He was a man of God, I was nothing.

I tried to forget what had happened and I succeeded. Until I met with a friend and we talked about how things were when we were kids. Then in an awkward moment, she told me that she had been molested by the priest.

She felt the same helplessness as I did. With further queries, I learned that this priest continued molesting girls when he was regent for the high school department. That he even gained a reputation for it.

I also learned that no one came forward to file a lawsuit against him. I found it the saddest thing—that none of the victims felt secured enough that she would be protected by the law and that she would be believed.

I still listen to Mass and receive the Holy Communion. I bear no grudge against my school or the Catholic Church because along with mathematics, my school taught me that I should not blame the institution just because one of its weak members sinned against me.

I just wish that the school had also included in the curriculum or the school rules how to fight persons in authority if the time came when they breached young persons' trust.

Menopause at 20

By Mena Pause

ILLUSTRATION BY STEPH BRAVO

I HAD ALWAYS THOUGHT I WAS IN control of my life. In fact, when I graduated from high school, I had my life all planned out.

Something unexpected happened, though. In first-year college, just before summer break, I was diagnosed to have cysts in my ovaries. They were big and needed to be removed immediately. I was only 18.

One of my ovaries was removed during the operation.

I tried to return to normal life. I continued to study, caught up with missed lessons, graduated on time, and even got an academic award. I thought I had put the nightmare behind me.

I was wrong.

In second-year medical school, I had to be operated once more, this time on the other ovary left. I thought the world was crumbling. I cried often. I could not be consoled by my parents calling from home.

I tried being busy, feeding my brain with medical information. We were on our oncology module. I became deeply interested in tumors and malignancies.

I can also remember the lecture on surgery with the graphic picture of a patient being dressed for operation.

I tried as much as possible to concentrate, but I couldn't help imagining what it would be like to be away.

I tried to imagine who I would be without this routine, this so-called medical lifestyle.

The impact of the second operation was much greater than the previous. If no part of the remaining ovary could be saved, I would be "medically menopause."

In short, I would never have children of my own anymore. I was just 20, and I was devastated.

But when the day of the operation came, I was smiling when I entered the familiar operating room.

I had prayed a lot and believed that God would take care of me. Whatever His plans are for me, I would accept.

I woke up in the middle of the operation to hear one sad news though; no part of the ovary could be saved. I wept like as if it were some kind of a reflex reaction.

Prayer

I talked to God and asked Him why; but who am I to ask Him or to even interfere with His will?

It was the saddest moment in my life. I was physically and emotionally exhausted.

I hated it when I opened my eyes, when the strong bright light came into my face and when I heard the nurses talking gossip.

I hated that moment when despite how psychologically bruised I was, I had to be strong and keep going.

The nurses kept asking why I was crying

I would never have kids of my own. I was just 20, and I was devastated

but I couldn't speak. My dad comforted me. He stroked my forehead lightly, and I felt the feeling of a creature being pitied.

But the tears came pouring just the same.

I was received by the rest of the family. I saw how strong they were trying to be for me so I told myself that I should be stronger. "Trust God, trust God," I kept telling myself.

I decided to stop school to rest. I asked God to help me make a decision. I asked for a sign from Him.

It was funny actually. It happened when I was still at the dorm, a few days before my operation. Whenever I came back to our dormitory from school, I noticed pregnant women parading in front of me.

When I reached my room then, I asked God to make it clearer for me. Give me more signs, I told him.

The next day when I went back to the dorm, I saw two more pregnant women. I told God that it was just coincidence. I told Him that I'd believe He wanted me to stop school if He'd show me another sign, at that very moment.

I went back to my room: Seeing another pregnant woman would be impossible, I told myself.

But out of curiosity, I peeked at my window. The moment I pushed the blinds slightly for a peak, a woman caught my attention.

I could not see immediately if she was pregnant. But when she turned around, I noticed that indeed she was.

I stood from by bed laughing. I couldn't believe what I was seeing.

I laughed at God and told Him that I still didn't believe He wanted me to quit school. My laughter soon melted into tears.

Medicine had molded me and without it, I was at a loss on my identity, my purpose for living. I don't want to give up Medicine.

I protested to God and tried to reason with Him. One more sign, I told Him.

Sunday came, my friend and I stayed outside the church because it was crowded inside.

I continued to pray to God, I asked Him to help me make the right decision according to what He planned my life to be.

Happy ending

The Mass began. Then something happened. A woman passed in front of us.

I actually didn't notice her immediately. When she turned around, I saw that she was pregnant. She was right there in front of me; a stunningly beautiful woman with a bump on her abdomen. The whole time of the Mass, she stood in front of us beside her husband.

This time I knew it wasn't just coincidence.

But I was still stubborn at that time. I was worried about the exams the following morning.

Back in my dorm, I reviewed my lessons. This could be my last exam for the year, I told myself, and I had to be good with this one.

Midnight came, and I found out classes were suspended for the next day. God had given another sign. I should have trusted Him more.

I am still young; I am not afraid about being strayed away from my medical calling. My experience has thought me the value of life, and as a future medical doctor, I find no other nobler profession than to be one that helps preserve and save it.

For now, I am preparing for the battle ahead.

I've experienced twice how to give birth; I have participated in two caesarian operations. It still pains me every time I see parents with their children. I envy their joy; I envy their contentment.

I know that there are many modern methods out there. I could get an egg donor in the future and consider artificial insemination.

But would I resort to those methods in order to satisfy my own physical lacking or even my psychological need, the need to gratify my ego that I am still capable of maternal love?

I don't want to be selfish. I'm also not so sure if I approve ethically of these methods.

And just imagine the emotional strain I would have to go through just to create the normal family that I want in the future!

Let's be practical. How many men in the world are willing to get married without having to pass his genes on or not to have a son or a daughter of his own?

For now, whenever someone asks me how it feels like, I'd console myself with the fact that my life did not end there. God did not let me die there. He continues to give me life for a purpose I may not understand now.

So who says that I will not have my happy ending?

New beauty finds

Lora Gahol

LET ME SAY THAT the current beauty season is causing major heart action on my part! Here are the special few that captured my heart at first swipe/whiff/smack.

Guerlain Aqua Allegoria Grosellina. First, the packaging. It's the kind that makes you feel all princess-y and sophisticated. It's just so beautiful, you almost get torn between simply staring at it and actually spraying the scent on. Once you envelope yourself in this rich, fruity fragrance, you understand what true luxury is all about. The delish scent is reminiscent of honey, cherries, cake icing and everything else sweet.

L'Occitane Honey Comfort Mask. The extended cold weather has taken its toll on my skin, making me reach for extra-hydrating products in the last couple of weeks, just to keep my face from feeling like the Sahara. This creamy mask has been the best thing for my skin on days I need an instant boost in moisture and suppleness. It's soothing, thoroughly relaxing, and is not at all like those peel-off masks that sting (it's a rinse-off). You'll love how velvety your complexion will feel and look after a mere 15 minutes.

MAC Prep + Prime. I've never used makeup base until MAC Prep + Prime, and now I wonder why women don't include it in their regular makeup regimen! This gel-cream evens out skin texture, literally smoothing out imperfections; it also mattifies, fills fine lines (especially around the mouth), and vastly improves how your makeup looks. It's silicone-based, making it perfect and nearly invisible under powder or foundation.

Lip destiny

Lancôme Juicy Gelee. I normally live on lip balm on a daily basis, leaving the glam glosses to special occasions and date nights. That is, until I met my lippie destiny, Juicy Gelee. It's water-light, which is really the main selling point as far as I'm concerned, and feels virtually invisible. Once you check your reflection on the mirror, though, you realize how the sensation betrays the look, because your lips look deliciously lacquered.

Shu Uemura Boutique Birthday 23: Summer Delights. This year, it's all about extending summer all year round with hues that excite the senses, waking up memories of summer even when rainy day gloom threatens to spill. And that's exactly how I've overcome the last few rainy weeks: by wearing Shu on my face! Wear sunshine on your face, too, by finding your best "summer" ally from this power-packed collection.

If you're into playing up your eyes, hit four birds with one stone by heading to the Shu counter and grabbing the limited-edition BTB 23 Eyeshadow Palette. This includes two muted, neutral shades for everyday wear, and two bold, vivid options for more dramatic effect.

At a recent evening wedding, I used IR Kyoho (deep blue-violet) to line my eyes. The technique opened up my eyes without overpowering my entire face.

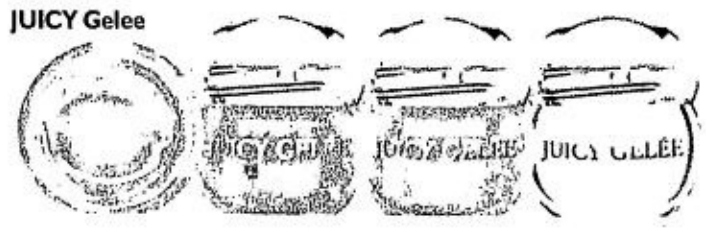
My personal favorite are the three amazing Lip Pencils that come in a set—the shades are all wearable, and toting them around gives major flexibility in changing your look mid-day.

Try Botan Pink if you're fair, Vermilion Red if you're on the dusky side (or for a striking lip, period). Akebono Beige is perfect for smoky eyes and subtly flushed cheeks for evening.

Shu Uemura at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza; Lancôme, Guerlain, and MAC at Rustan's Makati and Shangri-La Plaza; L'Occitane at Essenses, Rustan's.

E-mail the author at lora_gahol@yahoo.com or lgahol@pldtvibe.net

JUICY Gelee



BOTAN Pink lip pencil

What makes you a rock star?

MORE AND MORE 2BU! READERS are getting in on the "Rock Star: Supernova" craze!

KIKO Guanco, child of rock!

JASPER Lloyd Tan and his band, Thoughts and Notions

Unleash your inner rock star to win exclusive premium items from Star World's top-rating reality TV show. Keep sending us your most recent hi-resolution photos at a rockin' gig, and tell us in five sentences or less what makes your life rock. All entries must be e-mailed to rockstar_2bu@yahoo.com—just don't forget to include all the juicy details (your full name, date, place, gig/band).

Each week, up to three rocked out readers will win cool prizes from "Rock Star: Supernova" and have their winning entries published in upcoming 2bU! issues. So go ahead and rock our world!

KAMIKAZEE guitarist Jomal Linao rocks Marianne Tapales' world.

"Rock Star: Supernova" airs live, exclusively on Star World, every Wednesdays (8:30 a.m.) and Thursdays (8 a.m.), with primetime broadcasts at 8 p.m. on the same day.

Readers who rock!

Here are last week's winners who gave us reasons why they think they rock!

Marianne Tapales. My life rocks because as a writer for our school publication, the Weekly Sillimanian, I got to interview Kamikazee in their cluttered hotel room!

Kiko Guanco. This is a picture of me jamming with my band at a friend's rooftop last September. We like to rock like there's no tomorrow, yet roll like the rock gods of yesterday.

Jasper Lloyd Tan and his band, Thoughts and Notions. I formed a Christian pop-rock band I called Thoughts and Notions. Now our album is available nationwide under praise music and can be bought at House of Praise. I'm happy we get to rock for God.

Winners can claim their prizes by calling Cindy Corrales of Stratworks at 751-3805 or 06.

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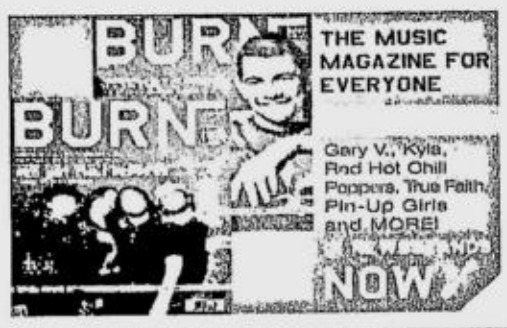


ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us

OPENING TODAY

Umaaraw, Umuulan

Stars Ryan Agoncillo, Precious Lara Quigaman, Herbert Bautista, Hero Bautista, Chanda Romero

Directed by Richard Arellano

Produced by the Bautista siblings, this digital movie, according to lead star Agoncillo, is "a tribute to TV director Luigi Santiago," who was killed trying to stop a bar brawl over a year ago. "He was raring to start work on this movie. He just had the final production meeting on the night before he was shot," Agoncillo recalls. "His assistant director (Arellano) took over. Everyone feels emotional about this project." The concept was a collaboration between Santiago and Adolfo Alix Jr., who directed "Donsol" for Cinemalaya. "It tells the story of a New York-trained director who returns home, heartbroken." Agoncillo acknowledges the "parallelisms" between his character Paolo Santillan and Santiago. "It's a love story. It's heavy drama." Exclusively in SM cinemas.

Click

Stars Adam Sandler, Kate Beckinsale, Christopher Walken, David Hasselhoff

Directed by Frank Coraci

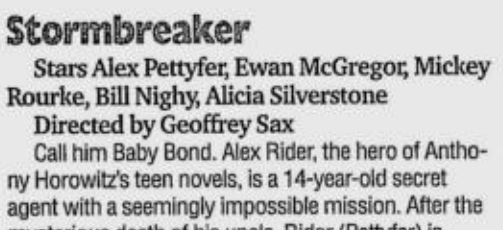
A workaholic architect solves his time management problems with a universal remote control—a device that "controls" his entire universe with TiVo-like functions, including special features like voice-over commentary by James Earl Jones. Peter Travers of Rolling Stone comments: "It's as if the filmmakers had decided to force-blend Scrooge with 'It's a Wonderful Life,' to preach the most treacly message about family values." Phil Sandler of the Arizona Daily Star commends the film: "[It] marks Sandler's reluctant maturity … It offers both life lessons and humor with panache. This may be a dumb comedy, but it's a dumb comedy with heart." Liza Schwarzbaum of Entertainment Weekly describes it as "a disgruntled comedy … At times dark and at other times gooey."

Stormbreaker

Stars Alex Pettyfer, Ewan McGregor, Mickey Rourke, Bill Nighy, Alicia Silverstone

Directed by Geoffrey Sax

Call him Baby Bond. Alex Rider, the hero of Anthony Horowitz's teen novels, is a 14-year-old secret agent with a seemingly impossible mission. After the mysterious death of his uncle, Rider (Pettyfer) is forcibly recruited into MI6 and is dispatched against a ruthless nemesis (Rourke). Empire Magazine thinks "It could be another Harry Potter … another Thunderbirds, a new Brit franchise." Derek Elley of Variety disagrees: "A shake 'n' bake Brit teen-spy actioner without a smidgeon of originality, humor or involving characterization. A high-profile bust … a British 'Spy Kids' without the fun, a teenage 'Johnny English' without the humor." Ray Bennett of the Hollywood Reporter agrees: "It's a lame and disappointing affair … appears unlikely to be rewarded with a license to kill at the tills."



Fierce People

Stars Diane Lane, Donald Sutherland, Chris Evans, Anton Yelchin

Directed by Griffin Dunne

Set in the summer of 1980, a 15-year-old kid (Yelchin) discovers that there is not much difference between an Amazonian rainforest tribe and the rich and bored people of Vlyvalle, New Jersey. Carlo Cavagna of AboutFilm.com opines that the director "weighs down a light social satire with a ponderous anthropological analogy … It's not that it couldn't have been an engaging film. It's that almost every decision the director makes is wrong and he lacks the finesse to make his disparate elements cohere." Chris Baranti of FilmCritic.com concurs: It's "a bundle of good raw material and confused objectives … [its] barely there structure is scarcely enough to hold it together … [it] seems to border on the irresponsible."

'I am not a monster'

By Nini Valera

HER LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE AS A housemate in "Pinoy Big Brother: Celebrity Edition" has not shaken off the controversy surrounding Keanna Reeves.

The former sexy starlet, who is now making two major movies—Viva Films' "Reyna" and Regal Entertainment's "Princess Keanna"—recently found herself in the center of bigger issues.

One of these is the supposed feud with her manager Boy Abunda. Tabloids have been reporting that Keanna was about to be booted by Abunda's Backroom Inc. for bad behavior.

Keanna told INQUIRER Entertainment on Friday that she didn't have time to be bad. "There is no day that I'm not working. I hardly sleep. If I sleep, it's inside my Starex, on the way to another shoot. I haven't been minding these intrigues."

She said she and Abunda were OK.

KEANNA REEVES

ROMY HOMILLADA

For INQUIRER, she answered the intrigues, point by point.

Did she scoff at the P10,000 honorarium for guesting in a show with Pilita Corales?

"Of course not," she said. "I was supposed to have asked if the money was for gas. I did no such thing. My road manager gave me the money after the show. I accepted it without comment."

She said she had not accommodated some close friends who had asked her to do shows for honorariums, but who were being charged her regular rates—about P150,000 for two songs.

"I explained to them that my manager decides my fees and which shows I should accept," Keanna said. "*Sa totoo lang*, I don't

I AM NOT/ D2

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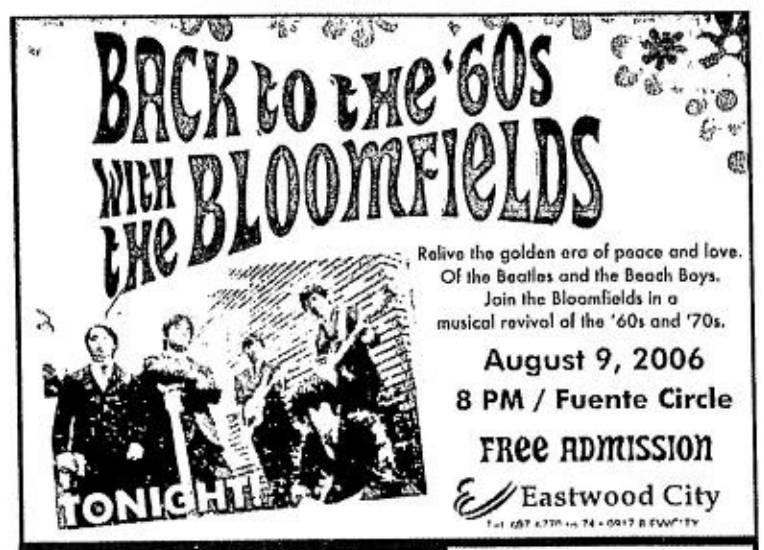

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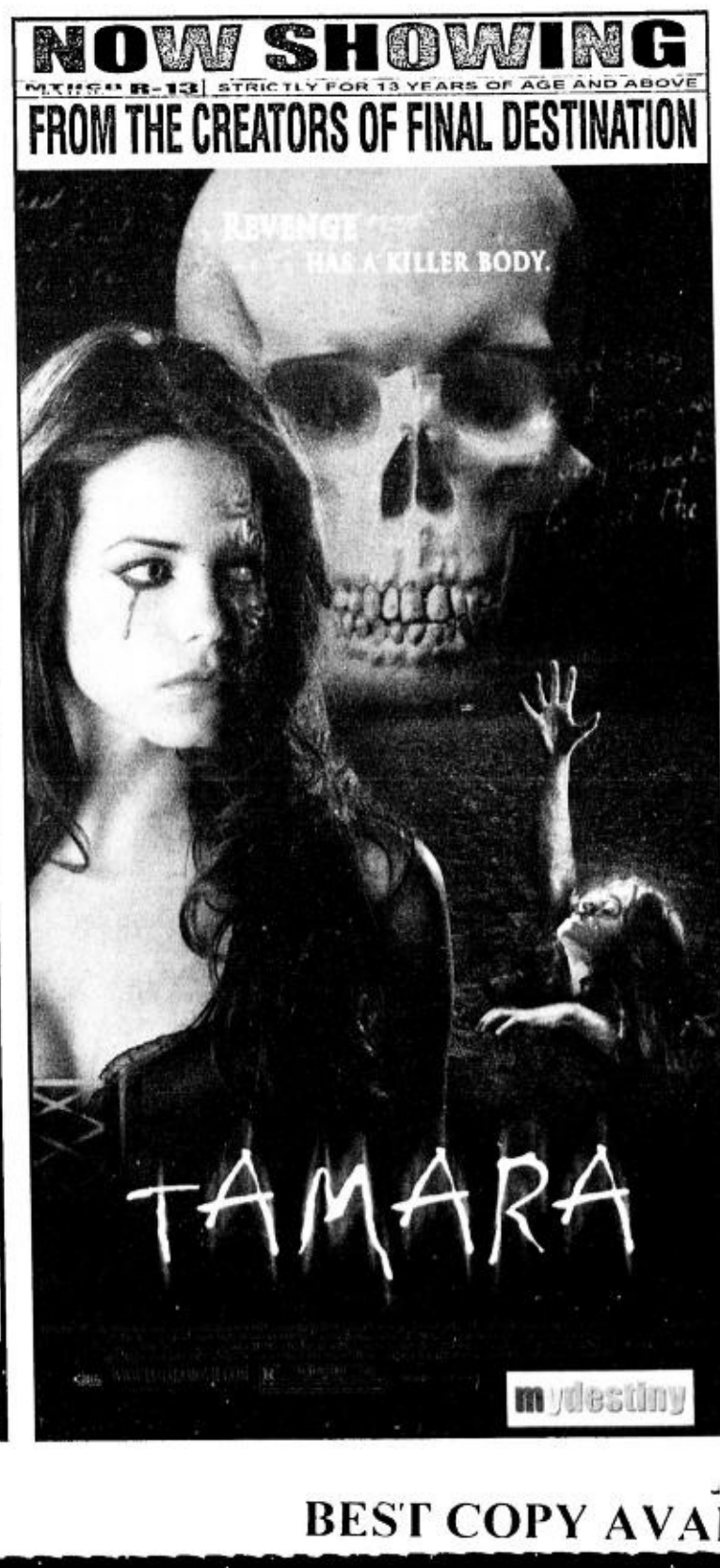
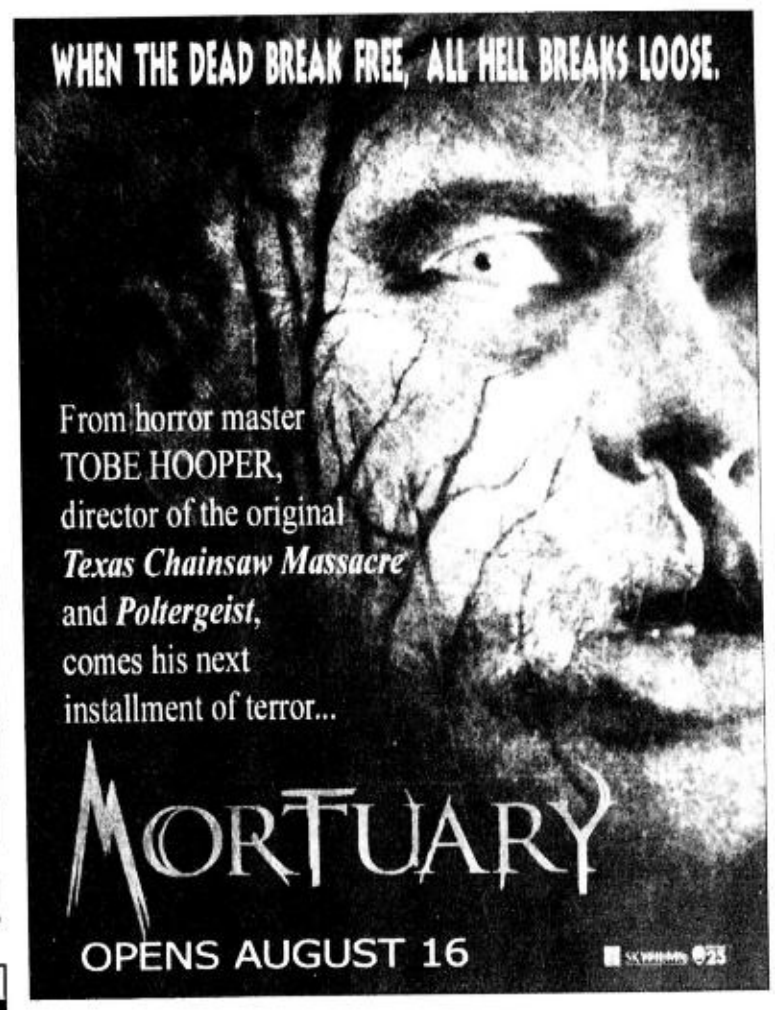
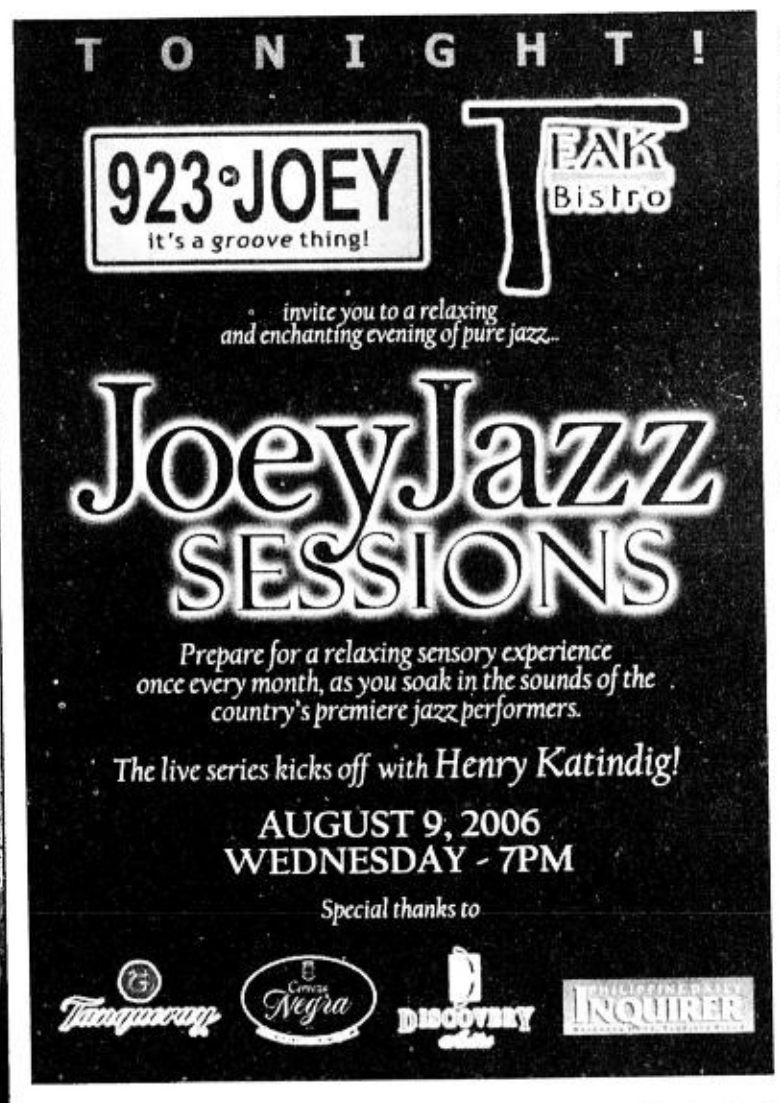
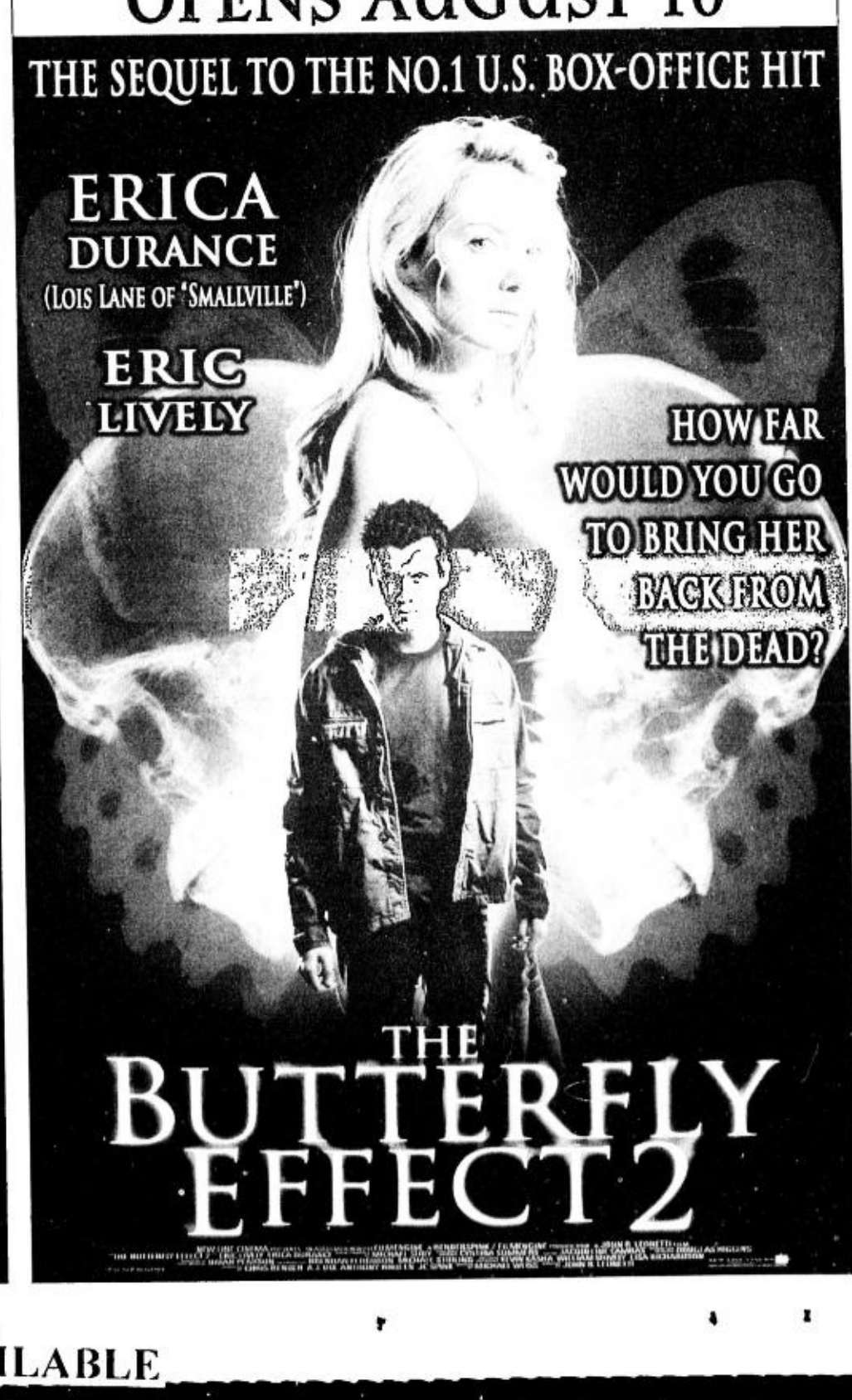


When the Banker offers P100,000, press the red button and end the game in your favor







Pra

AS EXPECTED, CHANNEL 2'
game show "Deal Or No Dea
a soporific sameness due to t
sibilities of its luck-oriented fo

Lucky contestants end up
bucks, while their less fort
parts go home with only a fe
hundred pesos. And, as of
the episode we've viewed, n
the show's top prize of two m

This, despite host Kris A
to up the lucky ante for co
wearing red or other "fo
colors or accessories—wit
sults.

As we watch the show fro
we've cobbled together a s
ture contestants to follow, to

• Play the game as best
long as your luck holds out.
show's resident Banker offer

'I am not a

From page D1

have time for live shows."

Did she curse and hit her d

"Who wouldn't be mad a
for three hours in the middle
gas up beforehand," Keanna
er. My time is too precious to
or killed?"

She and her road manager
break, the actress said. Wh
Quezon City, the driver hit a
of the car doors.

"That was when I got so
close the door of the Starex. T

On the first shooting day o
legedly walked out on co-sta
Paolo," she insisted. "In fact,

Even her love affair with
Andrew Wolfe has not been
Keanna was reported to be sp

"I don't have money to spe
cash I won in 'Pinoy Big Brot
fund for my children. My ea
ABS-CBN are for my family's
that I work hard."

A different story

She insisted that success h
ster, although former manag
ent story.

"I was happy for her when
talent after I left her," Hinola
won in 'PBB.' But I knew tha
She would always want mor
she wanted, you're useless to

Hinola recalled, "One day,
commissions. She insisted th

He claimed he made Kean
ed her. It was my idea for her
cort girl to media."

Keanna "confessed" about
cians in Abunda's "Kontrobe
in a series of guest appearan
and eventually, in a housema

On Friday, Abunda told In
Keanna. "I believe in second
serves to be heard."

On "The Buzz" last Sunda
na's side, apologized to the p
posedly slighted.

A
will
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ctical strategy for 'Deal Or No Deal' players

; WEEKNIGHT
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body has won
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quino's efforts
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ou can, or as
And, when the
you around a

hundred thousand pesos for the unknown contents of the briefcase you picked at the start of the show, press the red "Deal" button and end the game in your favor.

•You may not win the top prize, but P100,000 or thereabouts isn't peanuts—and much more than what other, more ambitious players in some past telecasts of the show have "won."

The irony is, these contestants were offered even more—P200,000 and upward—but chose to pass on them, hoping to up the Banker's offers even more, or to win the really big bucks they (mistakenly) believed to be in the briefcase they've picked.

In only a few instances, the briefcase has indeed contained the prized P2 million, but in all of the games we've viewed, the contestant opted to press the "Deal" button before the briefcase opened—and for a much smaller amount.

So, the word's out: If you're offered P100,000 or thereabouts, grab it—and you'll blame yourself less thereafter.

As for the game show itself, it's in dire need of somebody finally winning the top spot after weeks of telecasting. And some of its contestants' small winnings are paling in comparison to the bigger prizes on some other TV shows' game portions.

What could do the trick? Our "Deal" strategy is one likely and practical gambit. But other modifications should be thought up, to make the now predictable show truly exciting.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

New Jacqui Magno CD

JAZZ chanteuse **Jacqui Magno** launched her latest CD on July 29 at Merk's Bar Bistro, Greenbelt 3. Titled "The Very Thought Of You," the CD was conceptualized and arranged by **Toti Fuentes**, and has 12 captivating songs.

They include "Our Love Is Here To Stay," "Day By Day," "Days Of Wine And Roses," "What Are You Doing The Rest Of You Life," "How High The Moon," "Someone To Watch Over Me" and "The Very Thought Of You."

POWER PLANT
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ANT BULLY G	CLICK PG13	CLICK PG13
STORM BREAKER	SUKOB PG13	MIAMI VICE R13

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. monster'

iver before she fired him?
him? I was stranded in Tanay
f the night because he did not
aid. "I can't have a stupid driv-
waste. What if I was kidnapped

made it to a gas station at day-
n they reached her house in
garbage can and wrecked one

mad," she said. "We couldn't
hat was when I fired him."
"Reyna" last week, Keanna al-
Paolo Contis. "I did not snub
e went home together."
1-year-old commercial model
spared. As the older woman,
nding her money on Wolfe.
nd on men," Keanna said. "The
er' have been placed in a trust
nings from the two shows on
xpenses. They are the reason

d not turned her into a mon-
r Richard Hinola tells a differ-

Boy (Abunda) took her in as a
said. "I was happier when she
she couldn't handle success.
If you couldn't give her what
ner."
he just refused to give me my
I did nothing for her career."
a a household name. "I creat-
o tell her experiences as an es-

being an escort girl to politi-
syal." The revelation resulted
es in various ABS-CBN shows
e slot in "PBB."
IRER that he still had to talk to
hances," he said. "Keanna de-

Abunda, after hearing Kean-
ople that the actress had sup-

her manager, Abunda said, "I
old on to Keanna for as long
an."

OPENS AUGUST 23
500 POISONOUS SNAKES
30,000 FEET IN THE AIR
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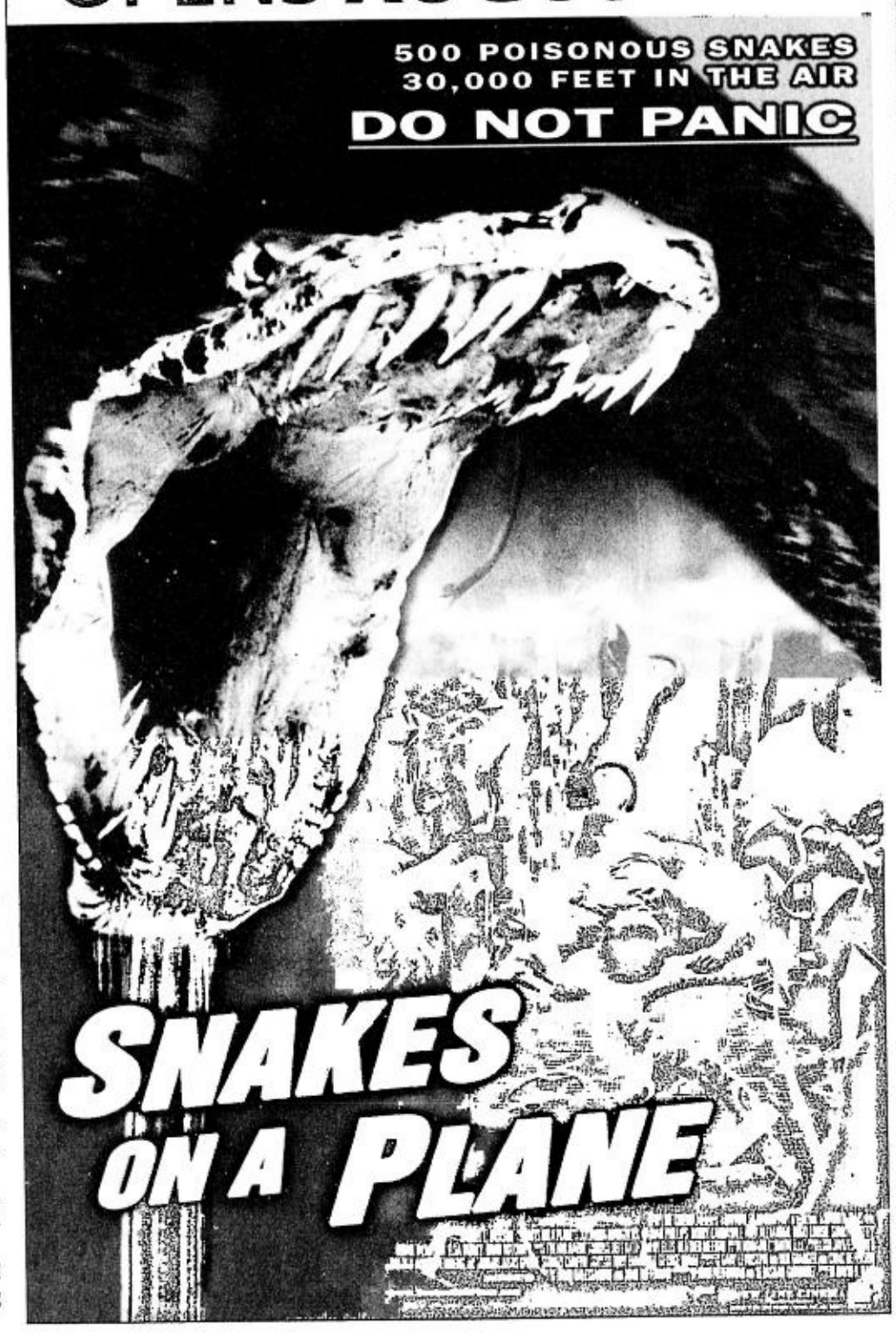

SNAKES ON A PLANE

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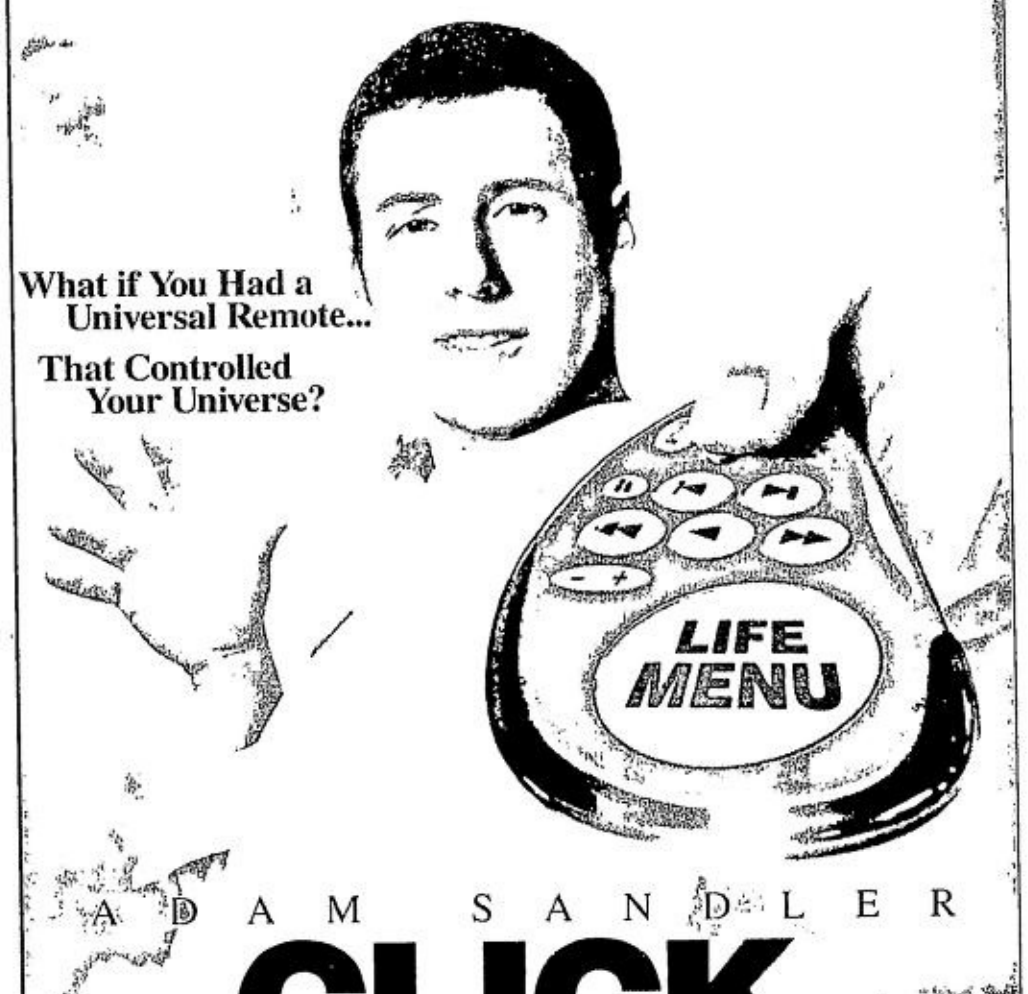
SEX LIES LUST GREED DECEIT

DIANE LANE DONALD SUTHERLAND
ANTON YELCHIN KRISTEN STEWART
PAZ de la HUERTA CHRIS EVANS
FIERCE PEOPLE
The rich are such a savage tribe.
OPENS TODAY
VIVA

Adam Sandler-Kate Beckinsale romatic comedy
LOVE & LAUGHS BEGIN TODAY
MTRCB RATING PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

MUTE MOTHER-IN-LAW | SKIP HANGOVER | DELETE PARKING TICKETS | REWIND HONEYMOON | FAST FORWARD WORKING OUT | PLAY TENNIS

What if You Had a Universal Remote... That Controlled Your Universe?



ADAM SANDLER
CLICK
CHRISTOPHER WALKEN KATE BECKINSALE
COLUMBIA PICTURES and REVOLUTION STUDIOS present a HAPPY MADISON/ORIGINAL FILM production a FRANK CORACI movie "CLICK" HENRY WINKLER DAVID HASSELHOFF JULIE BOWNER SEAN ASTIN
Distributed by COLUMBIA PICTURES

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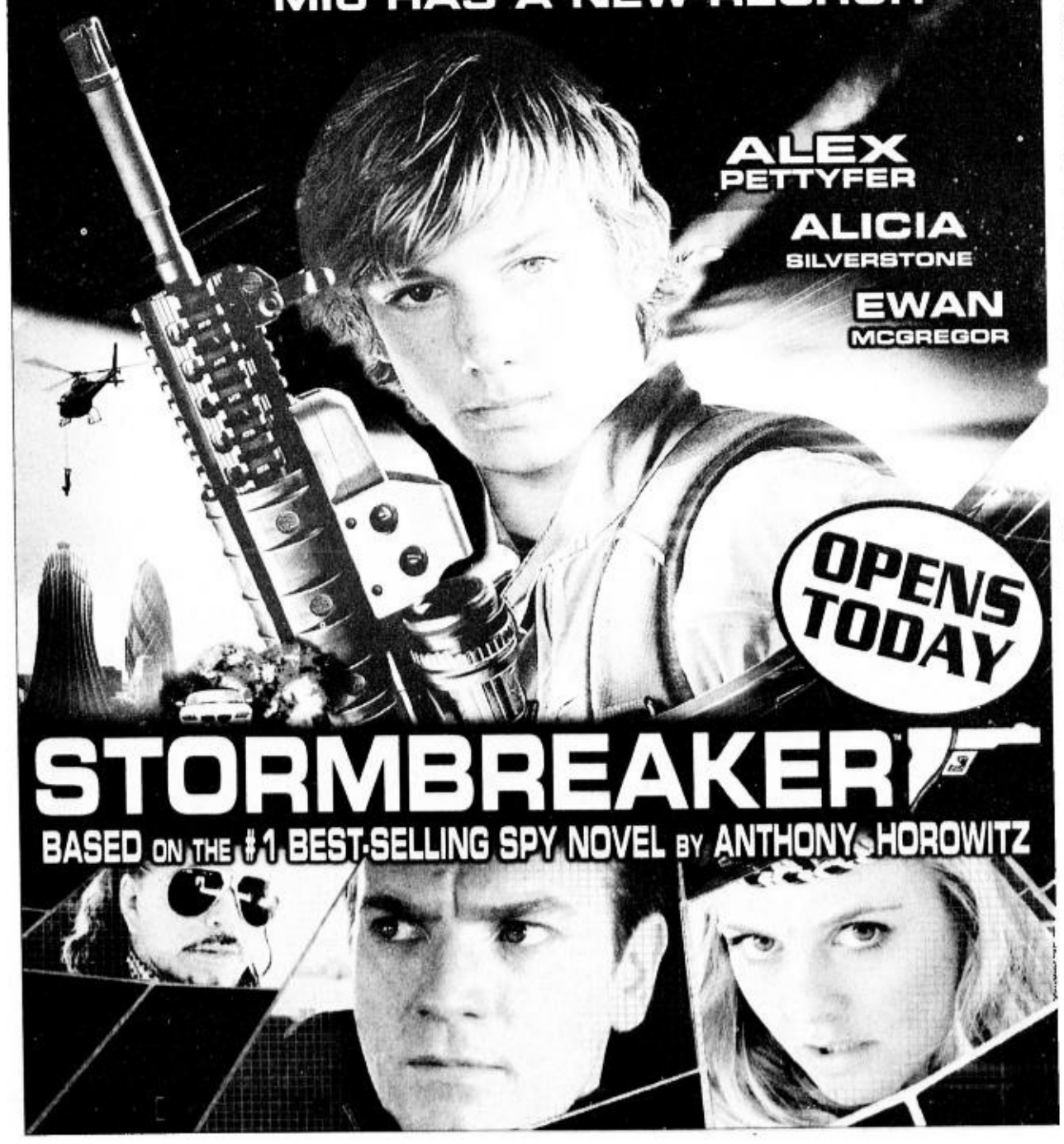
MOVE OVER JAMES BOND...
MI6 HAS A NEW RECRUIT



STORMBREAKER
BASED ON THE #1 BEST-SELLING SPY NOVEL BY ANTHONY HOROWITZ

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CUESHE

SHAYNE WARD

JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE

Now Manilow sings '60s hits

NEW YORK—BARRY MANILOW had so much success with the music from the 1950s, he's taking on another decade.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Manilow said he plans to release "The Greatest Songs of the Sixties" on Oct. 31, a follow-up to "The Greatest Songs of the Fifties," which debuted at No. 1 when it was released earlier this year and sold more than one million copies.

Manilow thinks his upcoming album might be even more popular than the first. *AP*

SPIN CITY

Aaron's debut

Aaron's debut album "Right Next To Me" from Universal Records was launched Sunday on the ABS-CBN noontime show "ASAP."

Born to a Filipina mother and Arabian father, Aaron is supported by distinguished musicians in his album—guitarist Jack Rufo, drummer Nino Regalado, rapper Gobas, R&B legend Keith Martin and composers Jimmy Antiporda and Ito Rapadas.

The carrier single is "Calculate It," a dance tune with R&B flavor. Aaron also remade the Neocolours' hit "Kasalanan Ko Ba?"

Froi goes solo

Froi, formerly of the boy band Jeremiah, goes solo with a self-titled four-track album under Concorde Recording.

Produced by Arlene Butterworth, the album has the song "Sabihin Mo" as carrier single. Other tracks are "Bathala," "Salamat Kaibigan" and an acoustic version of "Sabihin Mo."

Nina says 'I Do'

Nina's self-titled studio album under Warner Music Philippines will be available on record stores starting Aug. 15. "I Do," Nina's first single from the album, was simultaneously launched on radio recently in Manila, Cebu, Davao, Bacolod and Cagayan de Oro.

Cueshe's second

Cueshe releases its second album "Back to Me" this month, featuring the carrier single of the same title.

The "more mature" Cueshe sound is said to have tamer guitar tracks and more flowing melodies. Album launch is set Aug. 15 at Robinsons Galleria Movieworld 5.

Same Same & Lovi

Same Same (The Mofatts' Clint and Bob) sang "Without You" on their album "The Meaning of Happy" with new recording artist Lovi Poe. The twins handpicked Lovi among Asian and international singers. The album, from Sony BMG Music Entertainment, is now available in record bars nationwide.

Timberlake's latest

Jive Recording has released Justin Timberlake's "FutureSex/LoveSounds," a follow-up to his worldwide debut album "Justified."

The album's new single, "SexyBack," was co-written and co-produced by Justin, and Timbaland and Nate Hills. Timberlake embarks on a US club tour this month to promote the album.

Songs by Genesis

Genesis, formerly known as Patricia Javier, has an inspirational album under Viva Records.

The carrier single is "Sa 'Yo Ko Lang Ibibigay," composed by Tats Faustino, first performed at Genesis' wedding last December.

In her album, the artist also sings her version of the pop classic "Wind Beneath My Wings."

BARRY MANILOW

Shayne Ward

UK artist Shayne Ward's new self-titled album features the new hit "No Promises," plus remakes of "All My Life," a KC and Jojo original, and "Back at One" by Brian McKnight. Shayne won the UK reality television show "The X Factor" where Simon Cowell served as one of the judges.

"Shayne Ward," from Beverly Hills and Company, is now available on CD.

GENESIS

Sexual lyrics promote early sex among teens

CHICAGO—TEENAGERS whose iPods are full of music with raunchy, sexual lyrics start having sex sooner than those who prefer other songs, a study found.

Whether it's hip-hop, rap, pop or rock, much of popular music aimed at teens contains sexual overtones. Its influence on their behavior appears to depend on how the sex is portrayed, researchers found.

Twice as likely

Songs depicting men as "sex-driven studs," women as sex objects and with explicit references to sex acts are more likely to trigger early sexual behavior than those where sexual references are more veiled and relationships appear more committed, the study found.

Teens who said they listened to lots of music with degrading sexual messages were almost twice as likely to start having intercourse or other sexual activities within the following two years as were teens who listened to little or no sexually degrading music.

Among heavy listeners, 51 percent started having sex within two years, versus 29 percent of those who said they listened to little or no sexually degrading music.

Exposure to lots of sexually degrading music "gives them a specific message about sex," said lead author Steven Martino, a researcher for Rand Corp. in Pittsburgh. Boys learn they should be relentless in pursuit of women and girls learn to view themselves as sex objects, he said.

The study, based on telephone interviews with 1,461 participants aged 12 to 17, appears in the August issue of Pediatrics, released Monday.

Most participants were virgins when they were first questioned in 2001. Follow-up interviews were done in 2002 and 2004 to see if music choice had influenced subsequent behavior.

Natasha Ramsey, a 17-year-old from New Brunswick, New Jersey, said she and other teens sometimes listen to sexually explicit songs because they like the beat.

"I won't really realize that the person is talking about having sex or raping a girl," she said. Even so, the message "is being beaten into the teens' heads," she said. "A lot of teens think that's the way they're supposed to be, they think that's the cool thing to do. Because it's so common, it's accepted."

Ramsey, teen editor for Sexetc.org, a teen sexual health website produced at Rutgers University, added: "Teens will try to deny it, they'll say 'No, it's not the music,' but it is the music."

The Recording Industry Association of America, which represents the US recording industry, declined to comment on the findings.

Word of caution

Benjamin Chavis, chief executive officer of the Hip-Hip Summit Action Network, a coalition of hip-hop musicians and recording industry executives, said explicit music lyrics are a cultural expression that reflect "social and economic realities."

"We caution rushing to judgment that music more than any other factor is a causative factor" for teens initiating sex, Chavis said.

Martino said the researchers tried to account for other factors that could affect teens' sexual behavior, including parental permissiveness, and still found explicit lyrics had a strong influence. *AP*

Chavit winds up first film

CHAVIT SINGSON NINI VALERA

By Nini Valera

HE SOLD POPCORN AND soft drinks as a young boy inside the movie house that his family owned in Vigan, Ilocos Sur. Now, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson wants to relive the magical experience of the movies of his youth.

Two weeks ago, the original jueteng whistle-blower finished his first movie production, "Barang," a horror flick starring Juliana Palermo and directed by Buboy Tan ("Kalabit," "Puri," "Room Service," "Maldita"). For him, producing movies is also a way of continuing the legacy of his mother, a movie producer in the '60s. Caridad Singson owned the Northern Lights Productions.

"She made movies that starred Vic Vargas," Chavit told INQUIRER Entertainment in an exclusive interview on Sunday. "She produced movies when I was still a young man, up to the time I became governor. That's why I know so many actors. Fernando Poe Jr. would shoot a movie in Vigan for months. That's how I met him."

A promise

Chavit is also producing movies to keep a promise he made to industry people. At the recent birthday party of movie bit player Amay Bisaya, Chavit found himself in the midst of a virtual talent pool that had been marginalized by the current slump in the local movie industry.

"These small people have been the hardest hit by the downtrend in the business," he said. "They asked when I would make a movie. I told them, as soon as I find a good story. Right there and then, they had a story and a director. I went into production immediately."

"Barang," shot in Vigan, would be the first in a series of productions that Chavit intends to mount this year.

"I just met with Cesar (Montano), who said he has a story that he wants to co-produce with," he said. "I'm waiting for the script."

Chavit said he would be open to anybody with a good story idea.

"I can deal with Mother Lily (Regal Entertainment) or Vic (Del Rosario, Viva Films) whether for distribution or co-productions," he said. "I don't [even] mind working with industry people affiliated with

CHAVIT/ E2

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Artists unite against nervous disorder

They have pledged cash and are set to raise funds by selling personal stuff

RJ LEDESMA

COLOR IT RED PHOTOS: JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

By Marinel R. Cruz

COOKIE CHUA, COLOR IT RED lead vocalist and mother of 6-year-old Waki, says her only wish is for her son to grow up healthy and stay free from debilitating illnesses.

When Waki was younger, he contracted an infection that had really worried Cookie and husband, comedian Earl Ignacio. "We were always in the hospital. We didn't know why Waki kept getting fevers," she told INQUIRER Entertainment over lunch on Monday. "We got really scared for him. We're thankful that he's okay now."

CIR Vocalist Barbi Crisit and bassist Bopip Paraguya share Cookie's sentiments: "Our daughter (Maggie) is only six months old. When she's feeling bad, she just cries. She can't tell us what she's feeling. I hope doctors would develop a vaccine that will cure all diseases in the world," Barbi said.

"Every parent thinks that way," added Cookie. "The atmosphere is very polluted now."

The band, which recently released its fourth album under Alpha Records, is actively helping heighten public awareness of the auto-immune disorder called multiple sclerosis (MS).

The lunch on Monday was to launch "Celebrity Clean House," a bazaar sponsored by the Social Health Foundation to be held at the Eastwood Central Plaza on Aug. 16, 10 a.m. to 12 midnight.

The project will benefit the

ARTISTS/ E2

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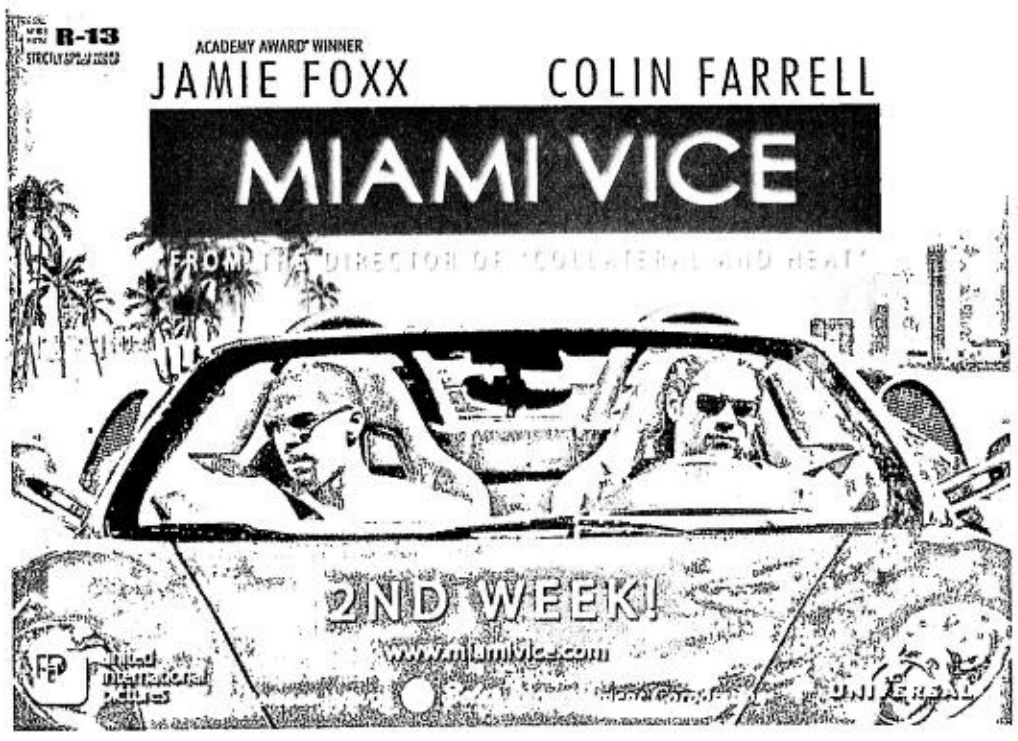
Chavit winds up first film

Erap (former president Joseph Estrada)."

In "Barang," Chavit had left the director and his production team alone.

"Hands-off *ako*," he said. "All I asked was for them to come up with a good movie. And teamwork."

He said he would spend as much as P10 to P15 million on a project. "But it better be a good movie so I would con-



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G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 SUKOB	2 STORMBREAKER	3 THX MIAMI VICE GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 FIERCE PEOPLE	5 ANT BULLY	6 CLICK	7 JUST MY LUCK
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 SUKOB		2 CLICK	
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX MIAMI VICE GUARANTEED SEATS		2 THX CLICK GUARANTEED SEATS	
	3 FIERCE PEOPLE GUARANTEED SEATS	4 THE BREAK-UP GUARANTEED SEATS	5 SUKOB GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX CLICK		2 MIAMI VICE	
	3 SUKOB	4 ANT BULLY	5 STORMBREAKER	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 CLICK	2 JUST MY LUCK	3 THE BREAK-UP	4 WOLF CREEK
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SAMUEL L. JACKSON

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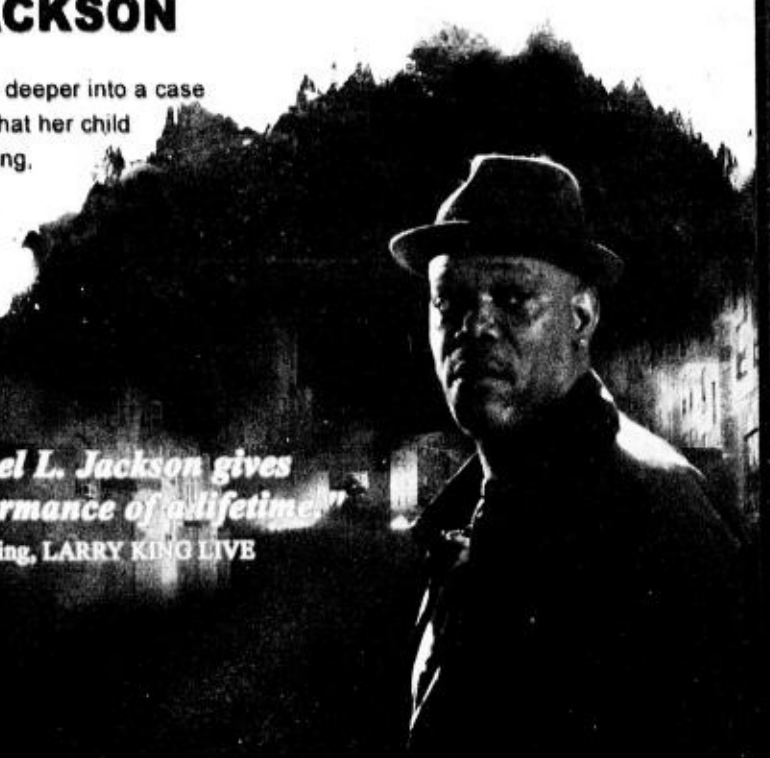

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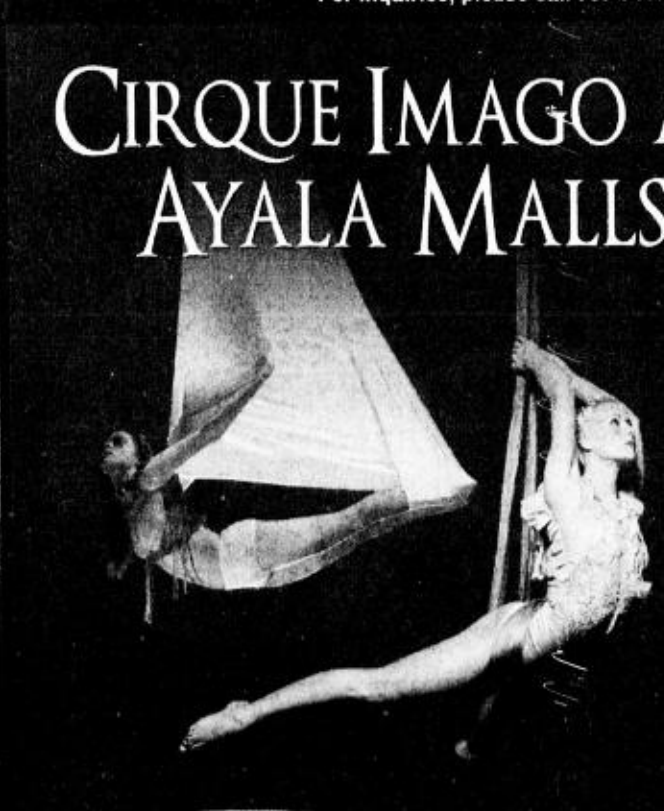

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From page E1

CESAR MONTANO, who portrayed him in a biopic, may co-produce a movie with Chavit.

tinue producing," he said. *"Para kumita din sa takilya."*

According to the governor, he was not happy about his film biography, the Carlo J. Caparas-megged "The Chavit Singson Story." Playing the lead role was Cesar Montano, whom he described as a "very good actor."

Too long

"The story was good, but the movie was not well done," he said. "It was too long—four hours. I told the director to shorten it. But he didn't agree with me. He said that was my story. *Hindi na ako nakialam.*"

"I'm still studying the movie business," Chavit admitted. "Everything is modern now. What I know from the time my mother was making movies could be obsolete. But I'm sure I can catch up."

Chavit is also prepared for show biz intrigues. He has been linked to several movie actresses even before his movie venture.

"Sanay na ako," he said. "Nothing can surprise me now."

COOKIE CHUA

Artists unite...

From page E1

Multiple Sclerosis Society of the Philippines.

"My sister is involved in the event," explained Barbi. "We were first asked to donate stuff. Unfortunately, we weren't able to gather enough things for our own booth. Instead, we'll perform for the guests and shoppers there."

Some 35 celebrities have already pledged to participate in the event. Among them are Lea Salonga, Bianca Lapus, Jamie Wilson, Maui Taylor, Rommel Aduccul, Alvin Patrimonio, Tessie Tomas, RJ Ledesma, Barbie Almalbis, Martin Honasan, Irma Adlawan, Mikee and China Cojuangco, Korina Sanchez, Patrick and Chesca Garcia, Tina Juan, Joyce Bernal and Ira Panganiban.

25 booths

According to Maria Charito Magno, director of Social Health Care Foundation, twenty-five booths will be put up.

Each celebrity will donate a minimum of P10,000 and will share one booth where they can sell their stuff, Magno added.

"This illness doesn't have to happen to us before we really do something about it," said Cookie.

Bopip added: "MS is not a joke. It's hard to diagnose."

Multiple sclerosis, a condition of the central nervous system, often afflicts people between the ages 20 and 40. It is twice more likely to develop in women than in men. Once diagnosed, a patient has to deal with MS for life.

The MS Society, organized in 1990, started as a support group for MS patients.

An MS tent, which will provide the public information about the disease, will be put up during the event.

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5 FIERCE PEOPLE
6 SUKOB
7 SUKOB
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
9 ANT BULLY

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 STORMBREAKER
2 CLICK
3 SUKOB
4 MIAMI VICE

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 CLICK
2 FIERCE PEOPLE
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
4 MIAMI VICE
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 STORMBREAKER
7 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
8 LADY IN THE WATER
9 ANT BULLY
10 SUKOB
11 THE BREAK-UP
12 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
5 CLICK
6 STORMBREAKER
7 MIAMI VICE
8 ANT BULLY
9 SUKOB
10 WHITE LADY
11 JUST MY LUCK
12 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 CLICK
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 MIAMI VICE
4 STORMBREAKER
5 SUKOB
6 WHITE LADY
7 JUST MY LUCK
8 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
9 ANT BULLY
10 THE BREAK-UP

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 CLICK
2 STORMBREAKER
3 MIAMI VICE
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 SUKOB
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
THE BLOCK
1 CLICK
2 STORM BREAKER
3 SUKOB
4 FIERCE PEOPLE
5 SUKOB
6 MIAMI VICE
7 STORMBREAKER
8 CLICK
9 FIERCE PEOPLE
10 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
11 ANT BULLY
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 CLICK
2 FIERCE PEOPLE
3 STORMBREAKER
4 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
5 SUKOB
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
7 MIAMI VICE
8 ANT BULLY
9 JUST MY LUCK
10 WHITE LADY
11 THE BREAK-UP
12 SUPERMAN RETURNS

SM CITY DASMARINAS (046)4323201-04
1 CLICK
2 SUKOB
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 ANT BULLY

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 CLICK
2 SUKOB
3 ANT BULLY/ TAMARA
4 THE BREAK-UP

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1 MIAMI VICE
2 STORMBREAKER
3 SUKOB
4 CLICK

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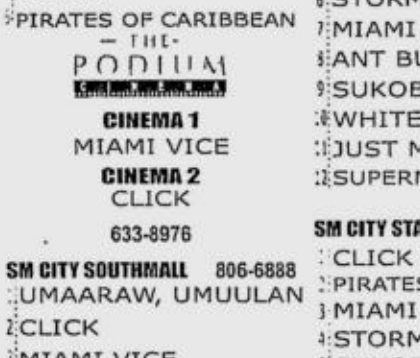

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1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 LOVEWRECKED
4 CLICK

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1 WHITE LADY
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
3 STORMBREAKER
4 CLICK
5 MIAMI VICE
6 SUKOB
7 JUST MY LUCK
8 ANT BULLY

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 CLICK
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 SUKOB
4 LOVEWRECKED

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 SUKOB
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 CHAOS
4 NACHO LIBRE

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-45
1 ANT BULLY
2 SUKOB
3 CLICK
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN
6 UMAARAW, UMUULAN

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637681-85
1 CLICK
2 JUST MY LUCK
3 ANT BULLY
4 TAMARA
5 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
6 SUKOB

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 CLICK
2 ANT BULLY
3 TAMARA
4 SUKOB

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5341265-66
1 LOVEWRECKED
2 ANT BULLY
3 CLICK
4 SUKOB

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 CLICK
3 THE BREAK-UP
4 JUST MY LUCK
5 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
6 TAMARA
7 SUKOB
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 SUKOB
3 SUKOB
4 ANT BULLY
5 CLICK
6 SUPERMAN RETURNS
7 RESERVED
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2976998
1 CLICK
2 UMAARAW, UMUULAN
3 SUKOB
4 AMERICAN HAUNTING
5 JUST MY LUCK
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 AMERICAN HAUNTING
2 SUKOB
3 JUST MY LUCK
4 CLICK

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5 STORMBREAKER	10 THE BREAK-UP

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3 RESERVE	3 MIAMI VICE
4 RESERVE	4 SUKOB

"MIAMI VICE" TRIVIA PROMO

Kindly answer all questions completely.
Fill in the missing letters to complete the right answer

1. The creator of the Miami Vice TV Series.
M _ _ C H _ E L _ M _ N N
2. Plays the role of Sonny Crockett in the Miami Vice movie.
O L _ N _ E A _ R _ L L
3. Jamie Foxx plays this character in the movie.
R _ C A _ D _ _ I _ _ B S
4. In the TV Series, who played the part of Caitlin, the woman Sonny Crockett marries?
S H _ E N _ _ E _ S I O _
5. Miami is in what US State?
F L _ R _ D A

Winners will get any of the ff:
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* winners will be notified via registered mail only

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Cut and drop this entry at any Robinsons Movieworld branch on or before AUGUST 16.
MIAMI VICE is NOW SHOWING at Robinsons Movieworld

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3 JUST MY LUCK	3 CHAOS
4 SUKOB	4 LOVE WRECKED

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3 SUKOB	3 JUST MY LUCK
4 WOLF CREEK	4 SUKOB

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2 SUKOB	2 WOLF CREEK
3 WOLF CREEK	3 JUST MY LUCK
4 TAMARA	4 SUKOB
	5 THE ANT BULLY
	6 CLICK

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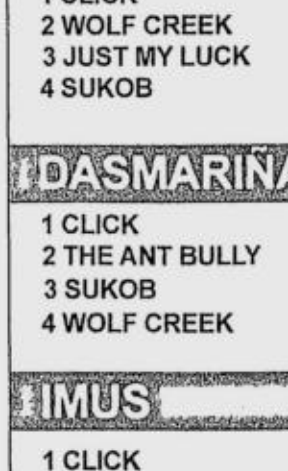
1 CLICK	1 CLICK
2 SUKOB	2 SUKOB
3 THE ANT BULLY	3 THE ANT BULLY
4 WILD ORCHID 2	4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 TAMARA	
6 WOLF CREEK	



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RUSHES

HOT AND COLD. At the workplace, choice for commercial of the month is "Silong," which depicts a young couple seeking shelter from the rain. Directed by Stephen Ngo, the ad features Miss Earth 2004 Priscilla Meirelles from Brazil. We don't get to see the cup of Nescafé until the last two seconds and that's fine... but all the girls want to know: Who's that guy?

Robin's charm, Michiko's next script–and who's that geek?

MOVE OVER JAMES BOND... MI6 HAS A NEW RECRUIT!

Best-Selling Author Anthony Horowitz talks about STORMBREAKER

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE FILM?

My immediate thought was relief. I was very nervous about turning the books into a movie because they have a huge and very enthusiastic following. It occurred to me that a bad movie would have caused me terrible harm, not just for the movie but for the future books. Young audiences around the world are passionate about this character. When I finally saw it all cut together and sort of finished, it was a sense of "Thank god it was okay." The $75m film budget was well spent by director Geoffrey Sax.

HOW IS ALEX RIDER DIFFERENT FROM JAMES BOND?

I think that Alex is very different from Bond. I cannot deny that Bond was my inspiration and where I began: "Let's do teenage Bond." I was very careful when I was doing the book and in the movie too, to think of the differences, so it's not sort of a Bond rip-off, to put it bluntly. On the set, when we were talking stylistically with director Geoff Sax, we'd talk about [Robert Ludlum's] Bourne project much more than we'd talk about James Bond.

Alex Rider is James Bond in Nike trainers, a spy for the Clearasil generation, prefers iced tea to martinis, and gadgets to girls. He is cooler and less sexist than Bond and apparently equipped with a license to bunk off.

WHY SHOULD PEOPLE SEE THIS MOVIE?

Because it's fun, I suppose. Because it's 90 minutes long, and there's not a boring minute in it.

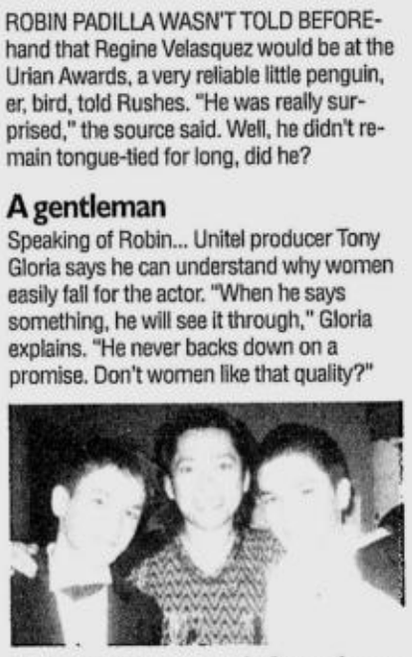
THE ACTION-PACKED STORY

STORMBREAKER, is the first book in the Alex Rider spy novel series which already sold more than 10 million copies worldwide and won the prestigious 2006 British Books Award. STORMBREAKER tells the story of Alex Rider (*Alex Pettyfer*) who has been unwittingly trained all his life by his uncle Ian (*Ewan McGregor*) with the skills to become a secret agent--scuba diving, mountaineering and martial arts. When his uncle is killed, Rider learns the truth about his uncle being an MI6 secret agent and finds himself forced against his will to take on a dangerous mission for MI6. ADVT

ROBIN PADILLA WASN'T TOLD BEFOREhand that Regine Velasquez would be at the Urian Awards, a very reliable little penguin, er, bird, told Rushes. "He was really surprised," the source said. Well, he didn't remain tongue-tied for long, did he?

A gentleman

Speaking of Robin... Unitel producer Tony Gloria says he can understand why women easily fall for the actor. "When he says something, he will see it through," Gloria explains. "He never backs down on a promise. Don't women like that quality?"

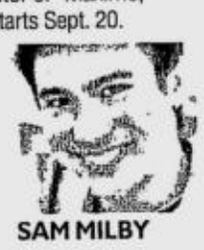


THE LOPEZ twins and ufo producer Raymond Lee COURTESY OF JEROME GOMEZ

Maximo's birthday

Speaking of Unitel... the company is planning a victory party for the cast and crew of "Ang Pagdadalaga Ni Maximo Oliveros," this year's winner of the Urian Best Picture trophy. It will be a double celebration, since lead star Nathan Lopez and his twin Gammy are turning 15 next week. Unitel is the official worldwide distributor of "Maximo," whose theatrical run starts Sept. 20.

HEATH LEDGER



SAM MILBY

Michiko's next

Speaking of "Maximo"... we heard its screenwriter, award-winning Michiko Yamamoto ("Magnifico"), has a new script, about two... little boys, of course! We also heard she was once asked to write a love story, and that she declined, simply saying it's not her cup of tea.

A Sam break

Speaking of Mall of Asia... Sam Milby dropped by at the Jollibee store there, as well as the one in nearby Blue Wave, recently to spend some time with his fans. The announcements said he was "the face of the Amazing Aloha and Cheezy Bacon Extreme burgers." Did he know that?

MACAULAY, 26

CHER AP

Once a geek

"I was a geek back in high school," admits Nikki Gil. Thus, she explains her being a huge fan of Disney Channel's Original Movie, "High School Musical." She is one of three Asian artists starring in the music video of the movie's theme, song, "Breaking Free." The other two are Vince Chong of Malaysia and Alicia Pan of Singapore.

The next Joker

LOS ANGELES—Australian heartthrob Heath Ledger will play The Joker in the next "Batman" movie, playing the villain opposite Welsh-born actor Christian Bale, Warner Bros. announced Tuesday. AFP

'Sex' and Macaulay

WASHINGTON—Macaulay Culkin, best remembered for his antics in "Home Alone," will star in a dark comedy about a couple facing sex problems, the industry newspaper Variety has reported. Miles Brandman's movie, "Sex and Breakfast," has the couple following the advice of a therapist who espouses group sex as a cure-all.

"I love this script," Culkin, 26, told Variety. AFP

Cher's auction

LOS ANGELES—Superstar singer and actress Cher said she would auction some 700 pieces of art and furniture from her Italian Renaissance-style home as she renews her lifestyle.

NIKKI Gil, Vince Chong, Alicia Pan

Cher, 60, said in a statement released by the Sotheby's auction house that she was entering a new phase. "I am beginning a new chapter in my career and have decided to rewrite my personal environment, my home," she said in the statement.

The Oct. 3-4 auction will be held in the Beverly Hilton in Los Angeles. AFP

ROUNDUP

'Talladega Nights' top box office

LOS ANGELES—WILL FERRELL'S Nascar spoof "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby" enjoyed life in the fast lane with a No. 1 finish in the weekend box office race, taking in $47 million, according to studio estimates Sunday.

The top 10 movies at US and Canadian theaters Friday to Sunday, according to Exhibitor Relations, official trackers:

1) "Talladega Nights: The Ballad of Ricky Bobby," $47M; 2) "Barnyard: The Original Party Animals," $16M; 3) "Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest," $11M; 4) "Miami Vice," $9.7M; 5) "The Descent," $8.8M; 6) "John Tucker Must Die," $6.05M; 7) "Monster House," $6M; 8) "The Ant Bully," $3.9M; 9) "The Night Listener," $3.6M; 10) "You, Me and Dupree," $3.6M. AP

GOLEM

New film fest dates

THE 3RD German Silent Film Festival has been moved to Aug. 15 to Sept. 5 at Greenbelt 1 Cinema 1. The new screening schedule: Aug. 15, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," with Radioactive Sago Project; Aug. 22, "Tabu," with Bo Razon; Aug. 29, "Mr. Golem," with Drip; and Sept. 5, "Asphalt," with Cynthia Alexander. All screenings at 8 p.m.

Coffee stories

THIS AUGUST, Discovery Travel and Living's series "Black Coffee" tells the stories of coffee, from the lush green plantations of Latin America, to the quaint and charming coffeehouses of Europe.

All these dramatic facets of the nondescript black bean are captured in a vivid three-part series. Beginning tomorrow, episodes of Black Coffee premiere every Tuesday from 10 to 11 p.m. and encore the following Saturday at 1 p.m.

The first episode brings coffee's origins to Ethiopia and its spread over five continents, sparkling revolution, controversy, creativity, business and slavery along the way.

'Freedomland' at Ayala Cinemas

COLUMBIA Pictures' powerful drama "Freedomland"—a carjacking, missing child and neighborhood torn asunder mystery—will be shown soon exclusively at Ayala Malls Cinemas (Glorietta 4 and Greenbelt 3).

The thriller, based on the best-selling novel by Richard Price, stars Julianne Moore and Samuel L. Jackson.

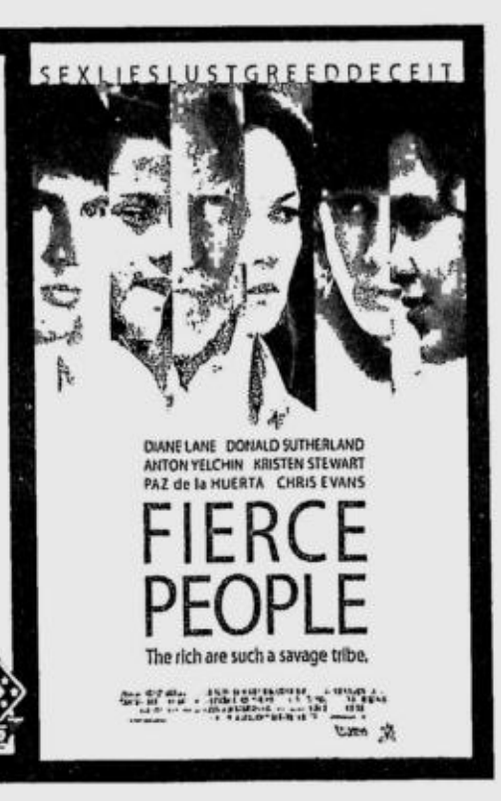
FIERCE PEOPLE: A POWERFUL DRAMA WITH A POWERHOUSE CAST

Could the rich be compared to a primitive tribe? Are vicious beasts lurking in suburban jungles? The new movie Fierce People examines the deceit and betrayal that erupts when a working-class mother and her son move to a wealthy, country club, suburb where social climbing is a blood sport.

Starring Oscar nominee Diane Lane, veteran actor Donald Sutherland, and promising actor Anton Yelchin, Fierce People is a bold drama about the dark secrets of America's elite where sex, drugs and violence abound.

Showing at
ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
Galleria and Ermita
August 09

MTRCB Rating: R-13
Approved without cuts



Broadcasters bat for more rights

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

IN THIS ERA OF DVDS, SATELlite TV and the Internet, broadcasters are fighting for their "very existence," said Maloli K. Espinosa, chair of the Copyright Committee of the Asia-Pacific Broadcasting Union (ABU).

Espinosa, who is also ABS-CBN vice president for Government, Corporate Affairs and Public Relations, told participants in the 12th ABU Copyright Committee seminar-meeting in Brunei last May that these new technologies posed a "serious threat" that should be immediately addressed.

Espinosa told INQUIRER Entertainment that ABU, which has over 140 members in 54 countries, usually hold meetings twice a year. The next one, scheduled in September, is under the auspices of the World Intellectual Property Organization (Wipo). It will be the culmination of ABU's work of 10 years, she said.

"It will determine whether we'll initiate a diplomatic conference that will discuss broadcasters' problems," Espinosa explained. The diplomatic conference will, in turn, result in a broadcasters' treaty that will, "hopefully give broadcasters additional rights."

Outdated treaty

For example, Espinosa cited the original treaty drafted at the Rome Convention in 1961, which "protected broadcasters from unauthorized recording of broadcasts, but not from the distribution of the recordings."

This is the reason behind the proliferation of pirated TV programs sold in the streets, she pointed out. "In Manila, we see pirated copies of Asianovelas. We have the same problem. Our local *telenovelas* are pirated throughout the region."

"The market value of our shows decreases if they are readily available as pirated VCDs and DVDs," Espinosa stressed.

Int'l level

In her speech at the Brunei forum, she said: "In the analog world, pirates can only make a handful of copies... with each successive generation of copies worsening in quality. In the digital world, the millionth copy will be identical to the original."

Signals can also be intercepted via satellite, through illegal cable transmission. The proliferation of cable operators is now blurring territorial boundaries. Programs meant for Japanese audiences can now be tapped by a Philippine cable operator, she said. "Cable rights should be recognized at the international level."

Another issue concerns the world wide web. "The Rome Convention didn't cover online distribution because Internet use didn't become prevalent until two decades later."

"Deferred transmission" is yet another contentious issue. "Some bars and restaurants attract customers by offering current sports events as come-on. But what about the rights of the broadcaster that paid millions for the event?"